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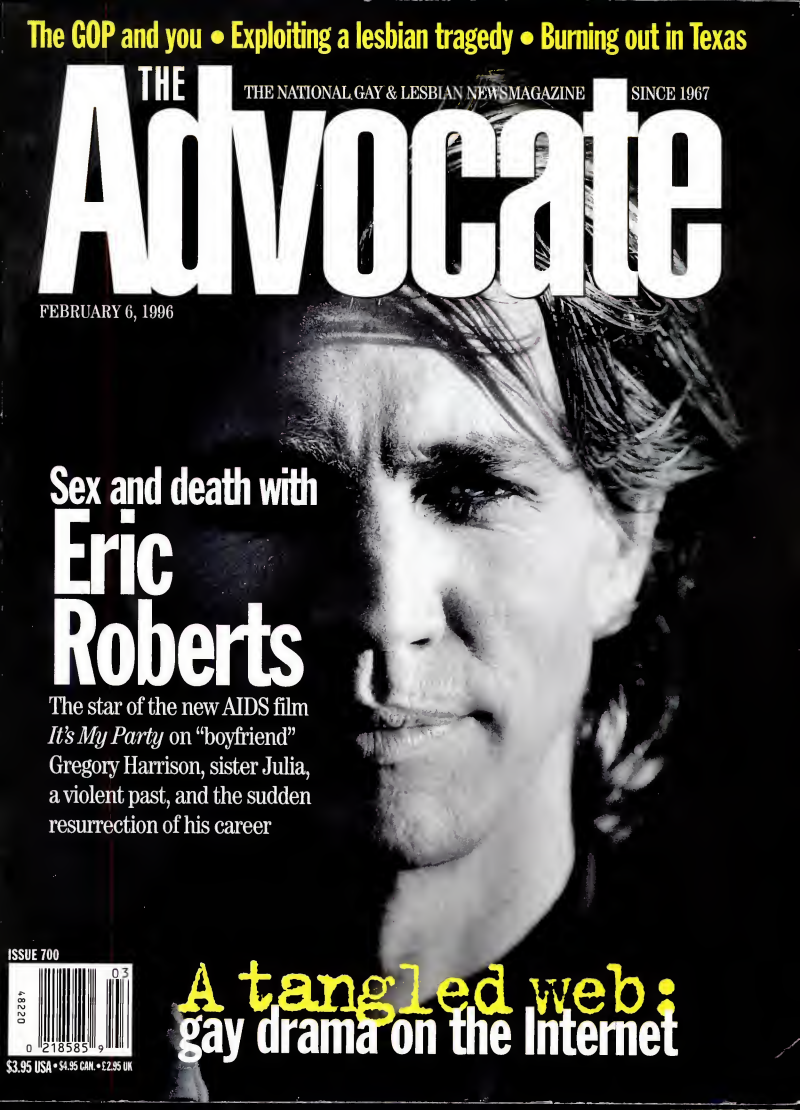
THE NATIONAL GAY & LESBIAN NEWSMAGAZINE SINCE 1967

THE Advocate

FEBRUARY 6, 1996



Sex and death with Eric Roberts

The star of the new AIDS film *It's My Party* on "boyfriend" Gregory Harrison, sister Julia, a violent past, and the sudden resurrection of his career

A tangled web: gay drama on the Internet

ISSUE 700

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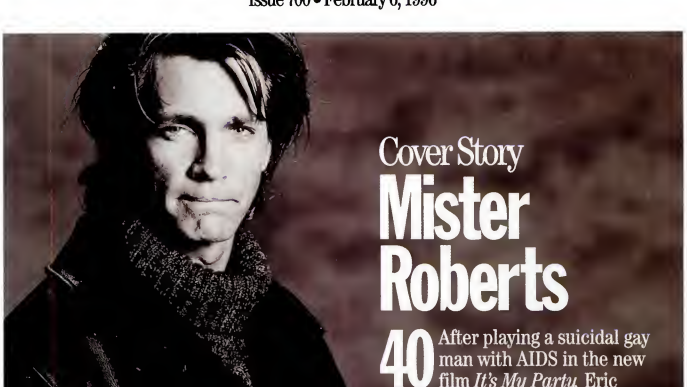

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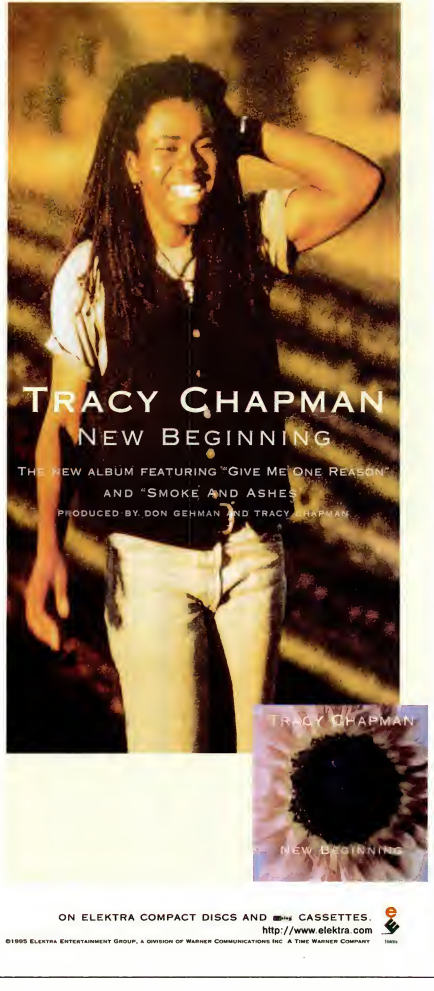
On the cover: Eric Roberts photographed by Greg Gorman for *The Advocate*



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The Advocate
The national gay & lesbian newsmagazine

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Letters

"Rather than focus on homosexuality, gene therapy should concentrate on homophobia."

It's genetic

I read with interest Chandler Burr's article on the continuing advances in genetic studies and the discovery of a "gay" gene ["The Destiny of You," December 26]. I was born not only gay but also with a congenital malformation of the left ear. I shudder to think what kind of decisions my God-fearing rural Midwestern parents might have been pressured to make back in 1958 by naive, narrow-minded physicians, however well-intentioned, if genetic testing had been available to them.

Matthew Armstrong
Bowling Green, Ohio

Rather than focus our efforts on gene therapy for homosexuality, why not concentrate on gene therapy for homophobia? Being gay is not the problem.

Jason McLaughlin
Strongsville, Ohio

In your article "The Destiny of You," a genetics counselor states her belief that any sexual orientation test available in the future "would be treated as sex-selection tests are today—namely, the majority of hospitals and clinics refuse to perform them." While true, this is misleading.

Having previously worked in a clinical genetics testing lab, I would agree with the counselor that the majority of hospitals and clinics refuse to perform tests on this basis. However, in any genetics testing, gender is automatically revealed. The pregnancy may be terminated once that information is provided; no reason is needed regarding the decision to terminate.

She goes on to allude to quality-of-life issues for "a child with the gay gene" carried to term by a woman "averse to homosexuality." How many gay men and lesbians can say their mothers were not?

Richard J. Heid
Trenton, N.J.

I don't understand why the scientists studying the physical workings of sexual orientation are looking at homosexuality, especially in males. Male homosexuality is not the problem. It would be of greater benefit to society as a whole if they looked at heterosexuality in males. Male heterosexuality is correlated with violence, especially against women and children. Those scientists would be putting their research dollars to better use if they were asking the question "Are the excesses associated with heterosexuality in men innate, or can they be ameliorated with the right conditioning?"

Marianne Seggerman
Stamford, Conn.

You simply cannot base rights on the basis of a genetic handicap, which is what gay genetic research has been attempting to do. Having different genes does not make the behavior good and decent. Gay behaviors, like straight behaviors, do not obtain their goodness and decency from their genetic or social causes but from the erotic pleasures they bring and the love, compassion, commitment, and even heroism they inspire. How can we expect others to accept the goodness of their own homosexual behaviors and feelings when they see gay-identified people trying to hide their pleasures under a cloak of genetic causes? When will the gay movement have the strength to stand up to the ancient leviathan of Judeo-Christian prohibition and say that homosexual pleasures are good and moral in themselves and need no further justification?

William H. DuBay
Costa Mesa, Calif.

If science finds homosexuality to be biologically determined, I believe it will impact homosexual rights only to the extent that it impacts homosexuals. Is it not true that we know with certainty that Asians, Africans, and Caucasians are biologically determined? Yet have racism, bigotry, and hatred disappeared? Have not laws been necessary in an attempt to overcome social injustice, and only after much suffering and civil unrest?

C. Ross Flaherty
Stinson Beach, Calif.

Troubled waters

Is *The Advocate* publishing James Earl Hardy's "River of De-Nile" [Viewpoint, December 26] because the essay wasn't eloquent enough to appear in a gangsta rap video or on pamphlets passed out by the Nation of Islam?

Maybe when Mr. Hardy is through bitching and whining, he can offer a constructive solution to all of us white people, who, according to Mr. Hardy, are *all* racist simply by virtue of our skin color. How silly of me to think that value judgments based solely upon a person's skin color constituted an accurate definition of *bigotry.*

J.A. Stanford Jr.
Seattle, Wash.

Skin color is just that. It is not a behavioral determinant. It should not dictate how we walk, talk, or socialize; how we think of ourselves or others; or whom we love, fuck, or date. For the sake of freedom of speech, Mr. Hardy, say all you want—just not on behalf of this richly dark-skinned African-American gay man.

Ralph Anderson
Dallas, Tex.

Religious wars

After reading Camille Paglia's Last Word column ["That Old-time Religion," December 26], I wasn't sure if

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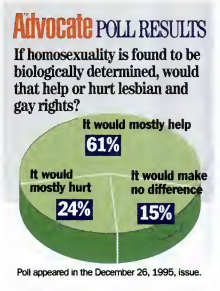


Poll appeared in the December 26, 1995, issue.

she is an *Advocate* columnist or a publicist for the Vatican.

She condescendingly refers to activists' "contaminated flesh" and proceeds to label our rage against the church as "displaced guilt." In this, Paglia blithely ignores the insidious effects of years of papal rhetoric explicitly condemning all practicing homosexuals as sinful beings. Such relentless reminders from an institution that (for many of us) was the foundation of our spirituality can spawn a self-hatred so intense that self-destructive (sexual) behavior is virtually guaranteed.

Byron Graham
Santa Monica, Calif.

Thanks to spiritual leaders such as John Shelby Spong, John McNeill, and Mel White, religious gays are accumulating a body of theological scholarship that is challenging the traditional interpretations of Leviticus, Sodom, and Paul. After generations of being browbeaten by "that old-time religion," spiritual gays are reclaiming Christianity and Judaism for ourselves. Why doesn't Paglia realize this?

Timothy Palmer
Austin, Tex.

Paglia is as blinkered as the Catholic hierarchy when it comes to describing gay activists. It's my experience that gay activists have spent as much time creating centers of care for people with AIDS as they have obsessing about bits of latex—a movement of compassion that would make Mother Teresa envious (if envy weren't a sin and therefore quite beyond her).

Hywel W. Sims
Santa Monica, Calif.

Paglia talks about ideas and a general discourse. I am sure that the Jews tried to reason intelligently with the Nazi power structure; enlightened reasoning with the shrieking fundamentalists of any religion will earn us the same destiny.

Ron Anderson
Glendive, Mont.

While a leftist knee-jerk reaction against religion is indeed unhealthy, it is not the "displaced guilt" of Paglia's slavish world. While I would like gay activists to recognize the inherent decency of most clergy, an unholy alliance of political candidates and fundamentalists of the Kristian Koalition mold is a proper object of scorn.

Bernard Gundy
San Francisco, Calif.

I can agree with the statement that "gay activists' open hostility to religion has been a political and intellectual disaster." More to the point, it's been like aiming a cannon at our own feet. But, pray tell, how will unfurling signs reading SYMPATHY FOR THE DEVIL and THERE IS NO GOD on violet satin over St. Patrick's Cathedral mend the fences? She's kidding, right? Isn't she? Please?

The Rev. Jan Nunley
Middletown, R.I.

Religion is a means to an end: living a better life in keeping with the commands of a higher authority. For many gays, overcoming a religious upbringing that labeled them as "bad" is part of the painful coming-out process, and I deeply respect anyone's decision to keep or reject part or all of his or her religious heritage. But to reject everyone else's religious convictions with "adolescent scorn" (as Paglia says) means gay activists will continue to talk to each other rather than to the larger culture.

John Feather
Washington, D.C.

Paglia is our modern-day Joan of Arc. Armored with an aegis of common sense and a saber of sharpest wit, she is one of the few leaders with the power to save us if we would only choose to follow. While her critics tie bundles of sticks at her feet, it is our gay society that perishes in flames. If I had to choose bonfires, I'd jump into her brilliant conflagration any day. All hail Saint Camille!

Louis St. Lewis
Chapel Hill, N.C.

Tennis, anyone?

Thanks for a most illuminating interview with Martina Navratilova ["I, Martina," December 12]. I always admired her for her athletic prowess on the court and for coming out when coming out wasn't cool. Suzanne Westenhoefer's interview humanized the legend.

Dan Summerford
via the Internet

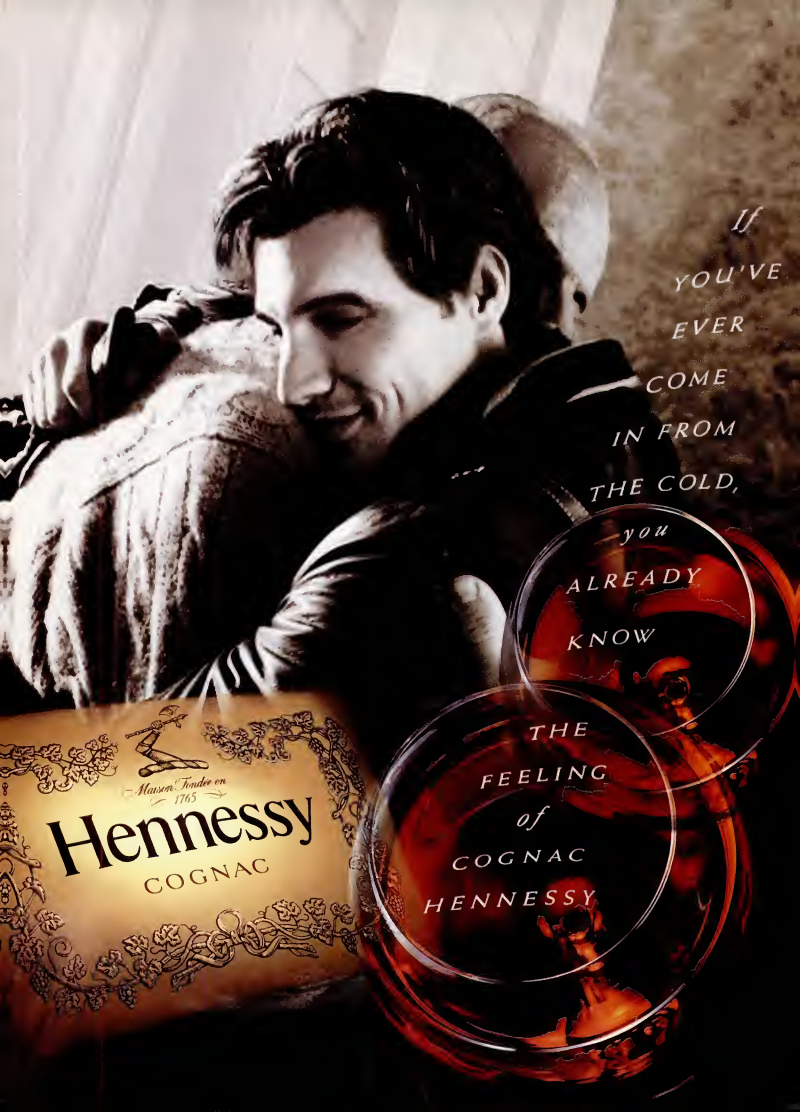
Westenhoefer correctly states that much about Navratilova "never came across on TV or on the tennis courts." Unfortunately, she then proceeds to repeat the same tired line of questioning without bothering to really get to know the substance of this well-publicized heroine. Rather than explore Navratilova's bedroom and coming-out, I believe that *The Advocate* would have been better served to inquire about her most deeply held beliefs, her passions, her fears, and how she might envision herself in the decades to come. To ask less is to diminish the magnitude of this woman.

Loretta Redd
Atlanta, Ga.

It drives Navratilova crazy, she said, that the public perceives her to be promiscuous, yet it's not so much that as it is the fact that we have witnessed her cavalier "love 'em and leave 'em and bitch about 'em" routine over and over. (Straight people think she's "the man" because of how she treats women.) When Navratilova finally finds her more-famous blond dream girl, how much will she be willing to give up?

Linda DePalo
White Plains, N.Y.

It is curious to me why Navratilova still appears so angry and bitter on the subject of Judy Nelson. From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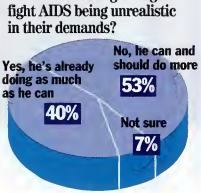
Advocate POLL RESULTS

Are those who say President Clinton isn't doing enough to fight AIDS being unrealistic in their demands?



Poll appeared in the December 12, 1995, issue.

Judy's many televised interviews, it is quite clear that she is nothing short of a class act, handling herself with great dignity and poise while always maintaining a wonderful sense of humor. She has spoken of Navratilova only in the most flattering of terms.

Isn't it time Navratilova gave the Judy-bashing routine a rest? It gives one cause to wonder how much "good progress" she is truly making in therapy!

Jennifer Bristol
Jackson Heights, N.Y.

In reference to the Log Cabin Republicans, Navratilova asks, "How can you be a Republican when you're gay?" Does she mean that a person cannot be gay and advocate free enterprise as opposed to state socialism, self-sufficiency as opposed to making everyone wards of the state, fiscal responsibility as opposed to the reckless waste of taxpayers' dollars? The dismal human rights record of Communist Czechoslovakia—from which Navratilova defected—is proof that big government is not always the gay community's best friend.

Duzek Cist
Calgary, Canada

Religious wars, part 2

Janis Ian's article "Christmas With the Dads" [Breaking Silence, December 12] is without a doubt the most blasphemous and offensive waste of paper and ink that it has been my misfortune to read in a long time. As a Christian who just happens to be gay, I am not at all amused by seeing what I and millions of others—gay, straight, and sideways—hold sacred, dear, and precious treated as an object of such low comedy.

Church bashing is no better than gay bashing. Nor is Christophobia the cure for homophobia.

W.J. Isaacks
Youngstown, Ohio

In thoughtless satire, groups are pilloried with little regard for truth or effectiveness or reform of some wrong. Indeed, amusement is obtained precisely from the fact of indiscriminately dissing unpopular groups and even from the offense that is taken by this. I thought that this is what our community is dedicated to fighting: "When one of us are oppressed, all of us are."

Nick Zymaris
New York, N.Y.

I had to come out just this once to defend Janis Ian's "Christmas With the Dads." This column will surely get the year-end hate mail flowing.

As for me, I ho-ho-ho-howled through the entire story and am now wondering what festive idea *my* Mrs. L will tolerate concerning *our* fireplace. Hmm.

Barb J. Lemasters
Hackettstown, N.J.

Marital discord

Let me see if I've got Gabriel Rotello's message right [Last Word, "An Aloha State of Mind," December 12]. Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund is flying around the country trying to discourage even winnable lawsuits because "the gay movement is not yet ready to force the right wing's hand over the issue of gay marriage"? Since when does the right wing set the timetable on our agenda?

Furthermore, the fight for equal marriage rights should not be contingent on the approval of the majority. As a black Jewish gay man, I find it appalling that Rotello suggests that a majority of Americans approved of equal rights for blacks *before* lawsuits were filed and won.

Toshav Storrs
Ithaca, N.Y.

Although I agree with most of what Rotello says about same-sex marriage, I do not understand how "civil disobedience" will sway public opinion in our favor. Fanatical behavior no longer furthers the cause. We should build on existing civil rights laws by voting and petitioning to have the words *sexual orientation* added to every local, state, national, and international charter on which we each have influence as citizens.

Gary Bosch
Honolulu, Hawaii

Rotello's point that gay people overall will lose regardless of whether we win or lose in other states is fallacious. We already have several bad precedents; there have been five major same-sex marriage cases since 1971. Would a sixth now somehow prove cataclysmic?

As for winning elsewhere also being bad because it would mean a win before we've prepared for the fight, Rotello must know that it takes time for a case to make its way through the courts. The larger point is that we have already had more than two years to prepare, and we're still breathtakingly short of where we need to be. To say that simply more time will fix the problem is dangerously Pollyanna.

Jeff Nickel
Boston, Mass.

At the annual conference of the International Network of Lesbian and Gay Public Officials last November, the marriage issue was a leading topic of discussion. The delegates recognized (as did Gabriel Rotello) that the real battle for acceptance will be in the court of public opinion. Therefore, we informally adopted the use of the phrase "same-gender marriage" in place of "same-sex marriage," which may send a message to nongays that is easier to deal with.

Rand Hoch
Daytona Beach Shores, Fla.

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"At first, I had some skepticism about the viatical settlement industry, but once I saw some of my own friends sell their life insurance policies, stop worrying about money and get control over their lives, it became clear that viatical settlements are all about living and getting on with life."

"As an openly gay man living in New York City in the 70's and 80's, I experienced the exhilaration of gay liberation after Stonewall, and then despair as the AIDS epidemic cut down so many wonderful people in the prime of their lives. My lover Gary and I lost most of our close friends.

"Before the AIDS crisis struck, as a young attorney I provided free legal services to gay rights activists, and in 1977 became a Board member of the Lambda Legal Defense & Education Fund, the nation's leading legal advocate for gay men and lesbians. Then, in the earliest years of the AIDS epidemic, I volunteered at the Gay Men's Health Crisis, and from 1984 to 1990 served as a member of GMHC's Board, fighting to get the government to recognize the crisis, provide money for AIDS research and care for the sick. I also co-founded and chaired the AIDS Action Council in Washington, D.C., the largest national effort to champion the needs of people with HIV and AIDS. Later, I served as Executive Director of AIDS Project Los Angeles, where I helped raise millions of dollars to assist people living with HIV/AIDS.

"Now, I am proud to have become Chairman and CEO of American Life Resources. At first, I had some skepticism about the viatical settlement industry, but once I saw some of my own friends sell their life insurance policies, stop worrying about money and get greater control over their lives, it became clear that viatical settlements are all about living and getting on with life. Cashing in on their life insurance made it possible for them to afford quality health care, pay their bills and live a more relaxed and less stressful lifestyle.

"As head of the nation's oldest viatical settlement company, I will press for regulation of this industry by state insurance departments to educate and protect consumers, and safeguard their confidentiality. I'll also be actively involved in assuring aggressive monitoring by the industry itself. My goal is that those companies which play by the rules and serve their clients' interests succeed, while those that cut corners disappear.

"I want people with HIV and AIDS – the people of my community – to live longer, with a sustained quality of life. You have my assurance that if you deal with American Life Resources, we will always put your interests first. Indeed, we encourage everyone who calls us to consult an independent financial counselor or attorney so they understand all their options. And because our staff is trained by professionals who work with local AIDS organizations, when you call us you'll be talking to someone who understands the complex issues facing people with HIV/AIDS."

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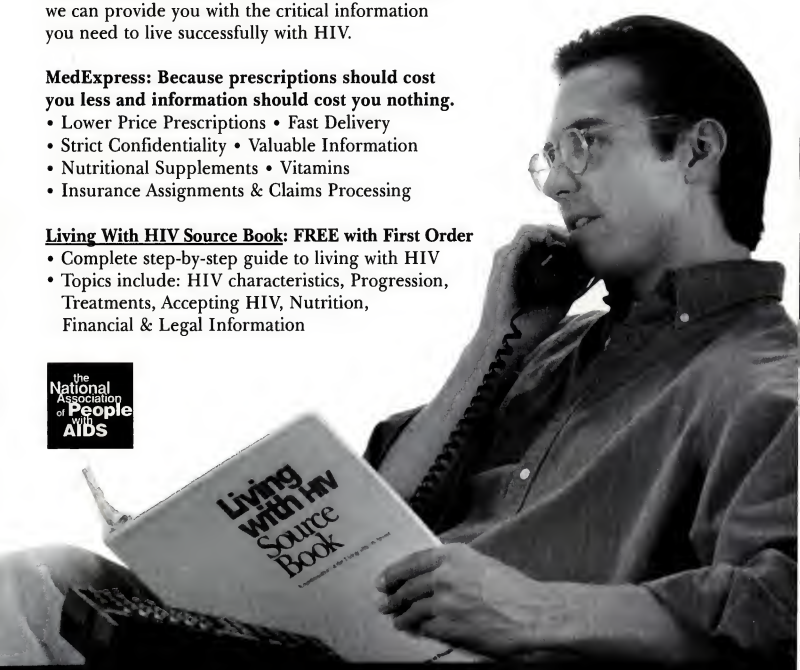
- Topics include: HIV characteristics, Progression, Treatments, Accepting HIV, Nutrition, Financial & Legal Information

the National Association of People with AIDS



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Agenda

REUTER

Adolescent behavior

Birdie Jo Hoaks, the 25-year-old woman who briefly suckered the press and won the pity of Salt Lake City residents by posing as an abandoned boy, was sentenced to a year in jail January 3 after pleading guilty to making a false written statement. Hoaks had shown up in the city just days before Christmas, claiming to be a boy abandoned on the cusp of his 13th birthday by a stepmother who could no longer care for him because his father had AIDS.

It turned out that Hoaks had a lot of practice telling such stories, having regularly posed as a teenage boy in con games over the past several years, sometimes acting in tandem with her twin sister, Becky. According to police, Hoaks arrived in Utah soon after her release from jail in Rapid City, S.D., where she served

Sound bites

"They stick their dinky through the hole, expecting wonderful things to happen."

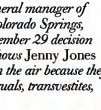
San Francisco police inspector Ken King, describing how an unidentified assailant was able to pour caustic chemicals on the genitals of at least two men viewing videos in private booths in a porn shop

"We got two crappy shows off the air."

John Gilbert, general manager of KOAA-TV in Colorado Springs, Colo., on his December 29 decision to pull the talk shows Jenny Jones *and* Carnie *from the air because they feature "homosexuals, transvestites, and lesbians"*

PAUL NATKIN/OUTLINE

REUTER



"I thought this would be my last chance to get my children to notice me. It didn't work."

Chicago patent attorney Dean Olds, after a civil court ruled December 15 that he was not entitled to his late wife's estate because he had encouraged his male lover, former model Helmut Hofer, to murder her. Hofer was acquitted of murder charges in 1995.

Under surveillance

As if it weren't bad enough that Rep. Enid Waldholtz (R-Utah) discovered—belatedly, she says—that her husband, Joe, may have skirted campaign laws on her behalf during her 1994 congressional campaign, the first-term congresswoman is also suggesting that her marriage may have been troubled in other ways as well. In a little-noticed aside during her marathon 4½-hour press conference December 11, Waldholtz accused her husband of making "questionable lifestyle choices," and her attorney followed up with a reference to "male gay pornographic materials" he says were found in the couple's homes. Joe Waldholtz's lawyer says he knows nothing about the allegation.

REUTER

Waldholtz

Former education secretary

William Bennett may not be quite the poster boy the religious right would like him to be. While the *Book of Virtues* author is no fan of gay rights causes, he is reluctant to make the federal government the cop that keeps gay-positive curricula out of schools—a departure from the Right's wish list. "If a community wants to do that, fine—let them do it if they think it's important," Bennett told *The Advocate*. "I don't think the federal government should be in the position to say what curriculum should be taught or shouldn't be taught."

In 1994 Sheila Kuehl became the first openly lesbian candidate elected to the California state assembly, but if state Republicans have their way, Kuehl will become the first single-term lesbian to serve in the assembly. Kuehl is one of five Democratic incumbents the GOP has targeted in 1996 in hopes of solidifying their hold on the assembly. Republicans deny that they are going after Kuehl because she is a lesbian, preferring instead to characterize her, in the words of challenger Mark Benhard, as "extremely liberal."

time for fraudulently collecting welfare checks under the guise of an abandoned 13-year-old named Nathan Devine. In 1992 Hoaks wound up at a boys home in Wichita, Kan., but was thrown out when doctors discovered her breasts bound and a cesarean section scar during a physical exam. Utah cops were tipped off to the scam by police in Vermont, where Hoaks pulled a similar stunt in 1993.

KRT

Tomboy twins: Birdie Jo Hoaks (left) and her sister, Becky

Business

Target practice

It sounded like terrific fodder for the tabloids December 27 when attorney Richard Yao, 40, slapped John Bult, the chairman of PaineWebber International, with a lawsuit alleging that Bult had reneged on an agreement to pay him $10,000 per month to keep their love affair secret. Yao maintained that he had had a two-month fling with Bult, 59, but broke it off after meeting Bult's former lover, who has AIDS. Yao's lawsuit asked for $20 million in damages.

But the story may be more fictional than it first appeared. Prosecutors say Yao had just pleaded guilty to harassment after being indicted on grand larceny charges for trying to extort money from another businessman. Bult's attorney, Harvey Horowitz, said that his client and Yao had never been sexually involved, and investigators found a file with the names of wealthy businessmen—including Bult's—in Yao's apartment. Assistant Manhattan district attorney Linda Fairstein told the New York *Daily News*, "We think this is how this guy makes a living, preying on people who are vulnerable because of something in their lives they are afraid to reveal." Yao's lawyer, Michael Ronemus, denied the accusations.

Media

The belle and *Curve*

Although they insist that their magazine had nothing to do with the French actress of the same name, editors at *Deneuve* announced January 2 that they would change its name to *Curve* effective with the January-February issue. "The timing was right," said publisher Frances Stevens. "It's a new name and a new year." The motivation for the change was not new, however: Actress Catherine Deneuve filed suit against the San Francisco-based company in March 1995, claiming her name was a registered trademark that the magazine was using without permission.

Military

Attack of the killer spider men

When Fort Bragg, N.C.-based Army privates James Burmeister II and Malcolm Wright Jr. allegedly killed an African-American man and woman in Fayetteville, N.C., on December 7, a probe quickly tagged them as racist skinheads. However, gays and lesbians may have also been among their potential targets. One of Burmeister's friends subsequently told police that the private had hoped to earn a spiderweb tattoo, a symbol among racist skinheads that the bearer has killed a minority member or a homosexual.

Trends

Nostradamus and Robert Bork

You can expect the Supreme Court to eventually legalize same-sex marriage, conservative legal scholar Robert H. Bork predicted at a Republican gabfest conducted in Miami over New Year's weekend. The man who might have been a justice himself in 1987, had

BETTMANN UPI

Bork

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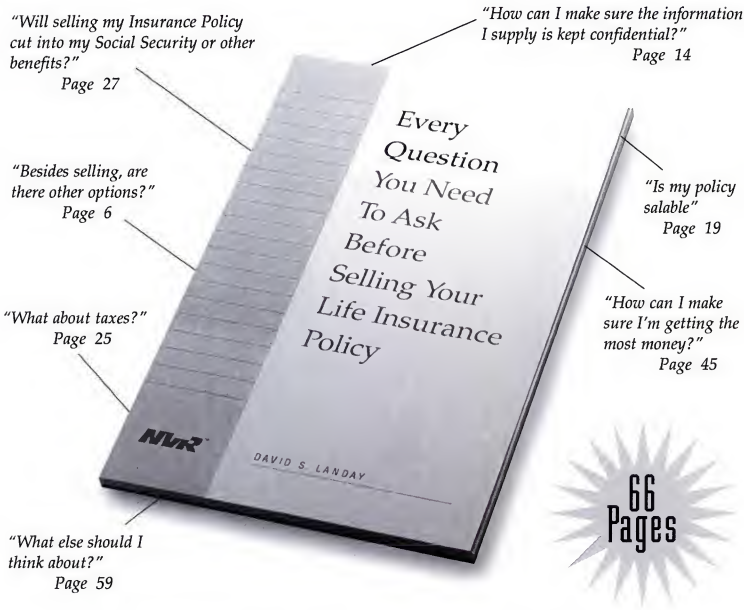

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The numbers

How the movement measures up

The Maine initiative

Campaign spending on the anti-gay rights initiative defeated in the November election:

Opponents $1,200,000

Supporters $141,000

SOURCE: Campaign finance reports

Teaching that gays and lesbians don't exist

States that recommend teaching students that homosexual behavior is unacceptable and/or illegal:

SOURCE: National Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League Foundation

Backed up at the EEOC

Case backlog at the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, which would oversee complaints of antigay job bias under the Employment Non-Discrimination Act:

300 days

SOURCE: *Straight Talk About Gays in the Workplace* (American Management Association, 1995)

Domestic bliss

336 U.S. municipalities, corporations, and academic institutions offer domestic-partner benefits.

98 Canadian organizations offer domestic-partner benefits.

SOURCE: Common Ground

Senate liberals not gotten their way, also guessed that unlike that of a decade ago, today's Supreme Court would declare homosexual sodomy to be constitutional.

Politics

A lack of initiatives

Two proposed antigay initiatives in Washington State failed December 29 to qualify for the 1996 ballot. Proponents of the initiatives cited apathy and lack of money for their unsuccessful effort. "I could just see in the general attitude of store owners and shoppers that they just didn't want to deal with this," said Annetta Small, the force behind one of the measures.

Travel

Key West Land

What's Key West without partying gay men? It might be like the new Key West at Sea World, a replica of the resort scheduled to open this May in Orlando. Says Sea World spokesman Nicholas Gollattscheck: "Visitors will have a chance to meet a dolphin, feed a stingray, do some shopping in some funky stores, eat some Caribbean food, watch the sun set while there's some funky stuff going on, maybe a guy with a bird, somebody who comes by on a unicycle, that type of entertainment which gives you that funky, anything-can-happen feel."

But Key West locals are unimpressed at the prospect of a homogenized version of their town. "Will they have the Gulf of Mexico, the Atlantic Ocean, the attitude, a corrupt police force, two thirds of their streets always torn up, the history, men who wear earrings?" bartender Charles Lamb asked the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*. "I mean, what's a man to do without his earrings?"

What's Key West without men wearing earrings? A resort at Sea World in Orlando

Law

Back to the future

As the defender of his state's sodomy law in *Bowers* v. *Hardwick*, Georgia attorney general Michael Bowers earned the enmity of gay activists everywhere. But now Bowers is on the defensive in a gay rights case. On December 20 a federal district court reinstated an antigay discrimination case filed by attorney Robin Shahar against Bowers, compelling Bowers to defend his decision to withdraw a job offer he made to Shahar after learning she was planning to marry her lover in a Jewish ceremony.

ALBERT TROTMAN

Bowers

The Movement

Off center

Antigay Amendment 2 has made Colorado one of the nation's most active gay rights battlegrounds, but that's not enough to help the Denver-based Gay and Lesbian Community Center of Colorado. The agency, which runs an antiviolence project and youth services program, has only four board members instead of its complement of 15 and is thousands of dollars in the red.

"I think the situation is serious," says Phil Nash, who served as the center's first executive director and is heading an effort to restore the organization to financial health. If the center does close, says volunteer Peter Gross, "it may say [that] our community may be more entertainment-oriented than activist."

Youth

Welcome to the club

Officials at East High School in Salt Lake City may not like it, but students there seem likely to get a gay and lesbian club. A group of students submitted a request to form the club last fall, and school authorities sought an opinion from the state attorney general's office in their bid to block it. However, according to a statement

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As I look at all the ads for other viatical settlement companies and brokers, it has made me appreciate how different ViatiCare really is. Our company has one clear focus: to help you determine if viatical settlement (the sale of your life insurance policy) is a reasonable choice for you. We know that the only way to accomplish this is to help you understand your options in a clear, concise and honest fashion. We believe that by talking to you one on one and by diligently and confidentially investigating all the intricacies of your life insurance policy(ies) and medical condition, only then can we give you the facts you need to make an educated choice. That is our purpose. To help you understand the facts as they relate to you and let you decide what is best for you.

If viatical settlement is the choice you make, we consider ourselves to be the best in the nation. We will viate your policy(ies) fairly, efficiently and with complete confidentiality. If we go through the investigation process with you and you decide against viatical settlement, that is all right too. You will have no obligation or fees. Our long term goal is that whenever anyone deals with ViatiCare, whether we consummate a business transaction or not, it can always be said with complete confidence that the people at ViatiCare are honest, professional, fair and compassionate. We treat people the way we want to be treated. This is the reputation we believe in and will always strive to maintain.

I am proud to announce a new financial alliance for our company with Cargill Financial Services Corporation, another Minnesota based company. This alliance (which we believe to be the largest funding commitment for viatical settlement in the United States) gives ViatiCare the financial strength to accomplish our mission..."To provide the nation's highest quality financial service for terminally ill persons, in a fair, compassionate and efficient manner".

Our success has been a blessing to people like me who are living with terminal illness and want quality financial services. Our focus, mission and long term goal will remain unchanged. Even after I'm gone, ViatiCare's commitment to earn our good reputation and your confidence will carry on. On that you have my word.

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Vice President, Director & PLWA

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Health

Reports from the medical front

Much as the space race in the 1960s yielded civilian benefits as a by-product, the race to find new treatments for HIV infection is now beginning to yield benefits for the treatment of other medical conditions. A preliminary study published in the December 21 issue of *The New England Journal of Medicine* suggests that low doses of the antiviral drug lamivudine (better known as 3TC) can help sufferers of chronic hepatitis B, reducing infection in the bloodstream to undetectable levels with no major toxicities. The only other treatment for chronic hepatitis B—interferon alfa—is highly toxic and effective in less than 50% of patients. Larger-scale clinical trials with lamivudine are being planned.—*Gary R. Cohan, MD*

Timing is everything when you're trying to get pregnant, whether via artificial insemination or by the more conventional method. In the past, fertility specialists have recommended insemination several days prior to and several days after the day of ovulation. But a new study (published in the December 7 issue of *The New England Journal of Medicine*) shows that the day of ovulation is the *last* day of the fertile period, contrary to what was previously believed. The finding suggests that the best days for conceiving are the six days up to and including the day of ovulation. For women using an ovulation test kit, that would mean inseminating on the day the kit turns positive rather than on the next day, the day of ovulation.—*Jocelyn White, MD*

"I know that sounds preposterous, but that's what I get. I just see it. I just feel it."

New Haven, Conn., psychic Ruth Burnett, on her prediction that a cure for AIDS will be found in 1996. Burnett claims to have an 85% to 93% accuracy rate.

released by the attorney general December 22, the district is obligated to fulfill the request under the Equal Access Act of 1984—passed after religious groups complained that public schools discriminated against religious speech. "The wording of the statute is so clear," said Douglas Bates of the state office of education. "This is a slam dunk."

Controversy

Freezing out the Salvation Army

A motion to release $65,000 in federal money to the Salvation Army to run a homeless shelter should have been routine business for the San Francisco board of supervisors. But as the Salvation Army found out, nothing is routine in San Francisco. Instead of approving the funding, the city supervisors voted January 2 to withhold it because of concerns about the group's attitude about homosexuality.

The dispute began when a newspaper published a letter signed by Salvation Army captain Samuel Southard that described homosexuality as "a serious threat to the integrity, quality and solidarity of society as a whole." Although Salvation Army officials said such sentiments are outdated and promised to implement sensitivity-training programs, the supervisors were unswayed. Said gay supervisor Tom Ammiano: "If they cannot change, I don't think they should get public money."

The Right

A case of triangulation

Don't like a newspaper? You don't buy it—unless you're the Texas chapter of the right-wing American Family Association (AFA). Then you try to drive it out of business. On December 19 the AFA sent letters to 50 businesses that advertise in *The Texas Triangle*, a gay newspaper, that included a veiled threat to broadcast their names on the AFA's radio shows if they continued to advertise in the newspaper. However, *Triangle* editor and publisher Kay Longcope said in early January that the ploy may have backfired. Just four businesses pulled their ads, and one advertiser sent AFA Texas executive director

An attack by the religious right against *The Texas Triangle* may have backfired.

Wyatt Roberts a note expressing appreciation for "endow[ing] our company with free advertising."

Crime

The trouble with Texas

Already the site of numerous high-profile attacks against gays, Texas now adds another to the horrifying list. On January 4 Kenneth Stern and Fred Mangione, partners for 16 years, went to a bar in Katy, a suburb of Houston, where they met half brothers Daniel Christopher Bean, 19, and Ronald Henry Gauthier, 21. According to police, Bean and Gauthier stabbed Mangione more than 35 times, leaving him to bleed to death in Stern's arms. "I said, 'Breathe with me, breathe with me,' but he was gone," Stern told the *Houston Chronicle*. Authorities said that Bean and Gauthier bragged before the killing. "We're going to get a fag." The pair's motivation: They claim to be members of the German Peace Corps, a neo-Nazi group that, according to police, targets blacks and gays.

Parenting

Same thing in reverse

Children of gay parents are no more likely to be gay than children of heterosexual families, said a study published in the January issue of *Developmental Psychology*. British researchers Susan Golombok and Fiona Tasker followed 25 children of lesbian mothers and 21 children of unmarried heterosexual mothers over the course of 16 years. Their study found that only two daughters of the lesbians identified themselves as homosexual, while none of the children of heterosexual mothers was gay—a statistically insignificant difference between the groups.

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† Quoted from a MARINOL patient seen on CNN, aired 2/94. Person depicted is a model who is HIV-positive.

* The USAN name for delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC).

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INDICATIONS AND USAGE

Marinol (dronabinol) is indicated for the treatment of:

1. anorexia associated with weight loss in patients with AIDS; and
2. nausea and vomiting associated with cancer chemotherapy in patients who have failed to respond adequately to conventional antiemetic treatments.

CONTRAINDICATIONS

Marinol (dronabinol) is contraindicated in any patient who has a history of hypersensitivity to any cannabinoid or sesame oil.

WARNINGS

Marinol (dronabinol) is a medication with a potential for abuse. Physicians and pharmacists should use the same care in prescribing and accounting for Marinol as they would with morphine or other drugs controlled under Schedule II (CII) of the Controlled Substances Act. Because of the risk of diversion, it is recommended that prescriptions be limited to the amount necessary for the period between clinic visits.

Patients receiving treatment with Marinol should be specifically warned not to drive, operate machinery, or engage in any hazardous activity until it is established that they are able to tolerate the drug and to perform such tasks safely.

PRECAUTIONS

General: The risk/benefit ratio of Marinol (dronabinol) use should be carefully evaluated in patients with the following medical conditions because of individual variation in response and tolerance to the effects of Marinol.

Marinol should be used with caution in patients with cardiac disorders because of occasional hypotension, possible hypertension, syncope, or tachycardia (see CLINICAL PHARMACOLOGY).

Marinol should be used with caution in patients with a history of substance abuse, including alcohol abuse or dependence, because they may be more prone to abuse Marinol as well. Multiple substance abuse is common and marijuana, which contains the same active compound, is a frequently abused substance.

Marinol should be used with caution and careful psychiatric monitoring in patients with mania, depression, or schizophrenia because Marinol may exacerbate these illnesses.

Marinol should be used with caution in patients receiving concomitant therapy with sedatives, hypnotics or other psychoactive drugs because of the potential for additive or synergistic CNS effects.

Marinol should be used with caution in pregnant patients, nursing mothers, or pediatric patients because it has not been studied in these patient populations.

Marinol should be used with caution for treatment of anorexia and weight loss in elderly patients with AIDS because they may be more sensitive to the psychoactive effects and because its use in these patients has not been studied.

Information for Patients: Patients receiving treatment with Marinol (dronabinol) should be alerted to the potential for additive central nervous system depression if Marinol is used concomitantly with alcohol or other CNS depressants such as benzodiazepines and barbiturates.

Patients receiving treatment with Marinol should be specifically warned not to drive, operate machinery, or engage in any hazardous activity until it is established that they are able to tolerate the drug and to perform such tasks safely.

Patients using Marinol should be advised of possible changes in mood and other adverse behavioral effects of the drug so as to avoid panic in the event of such manifestations. Patients should remain under the supervision of a responsible adult during initial use of Marinol and following dosage adjustments.

Drug Interactions: In studies involving patients with AIDS and/or cancer, Marinol (dronabinol) has been co-administered with a variety of medications (e.g., cytotoxic agents, anti-infective agents, sedatives, or opioid analgesics) without resulting in any clinically significant drug/drug interactions. Although no drug/drug interactions were discovered during the clinical trials of Marinol, cannabinoids may interact with other medications through both metabolic and pharmacodynamic mechanisms. Dronabinol is highly protein bound to plasma proteins, and therefore, might displace other protein-bound drugs. Although this displacement has not been confirmed *in vivo*, practitioners should monitor patients for a change in dosage requirements when administering dronabinol to patients receiving other highly protein-bound drugs. Published reports of drug/drug interactions involving cannabinoids are summarized in the following table.

CONCOMITANT DRUG	CLINICAL EFFECT(S)
Amphetamines, cocaine, other sympathomimetic agents	*Additive hypertension, tachycardia, possibly cardiotoxicity*
Atropine, scopolamine, antihistamines, other anticholinergic agents	*Additive or super-additive tachycardia, drowsiness*
Amitriptyline, amoxapine, desipramine, other tricyclic antidepressants	*Additive tachycardia, hypertension, drowsiness*
Barbiturates, benzodiazepines, ethanol, lithium, opioids, buspirone, antihistamines, muscle relaxants, other CNS depressants	*Additive drowsiness and CNS depression*
Disulfiram	*A reversible hypomanic reaction was reported in a 28 y/o man who smoked marijuana; confirmed by dechallenge and rechallenge*
Fluoxetine	*A 21 y/o female with depression and bulimia receiving 20 mg/day fluoxetine X 4 wks became hypomanic after smoking marijuana; symptoms resolved after 4 days*
Antipyrine, barbiturates	*Decreased clearance of these agents, presumably via competitive inhibition of metabolism*
Theophylline	*Increased theophylline metabolism reported with smoking of marijuana; effect similar to that following smoking tobacco*

Carcinogenesis, Mutagenesis, Impairment of Fertility: Carcinogenicity studies have not been performed with dronabinol. Mutagenicity testing of dronabinol was negative in an Ames test. In a long-term study (77 days) in rats, oral administration of dronabinol at doses of 30 to 150 mg/m², equivalent to 0.3 to 1.5 times maximum recommended human dose (MRHD) of 90 mg/m²/day in cancer patients or 2 to 10 times MRHD of 15 mg/m²/day in AIDS patients, reduced ventral prostate, seminal vesicle and epididymal weights and caused a decrease in seminal fluid volume. Decreases in spermatogenesis, number of developing germ cells, and number of Leydig cells in the testis were also observed. However, sperm count, mating success and testosterone levels were not affected. The significance of these animal findings in humans is not known.

Pregnancy: Pregnancy Category C. Reproduction studies with dronabinol have been performed in mice at 15 to 450 mg/m², equivalent to 0.2 to 5 times maximum recommended human dose (MRHD) of 90 mg/m²/day in cancer patients or 1 to 30 times MRHD of 15 mg/m²/day in AIDS patients, and in rats at 74 to 295 mg/m² (equivalent to 0.8 to 3 times MRHD of 90 mg/m² in cancer patients or 5 to 20 times MRHD of 15 mg/m²/day in AIDS patients). These studies have revealed no evidence of teratogenicity due to dronabinol. At these dosages in mice and rats, dronabinol decreased maternal weight gain and number of viable pups and increased fetal mortality and early resorptions. Such effects were dose dependent and less apparent at lower doses which produced less maternal toxicity. There are no adequate and well-controlled studies in pregnant women. Dronabinol should be used only if the potential benefit justifies the potential risk to the fetus.

Nursing Mothers: Use of Marinol is not recommended in nursing mothers since, in addition to the secretion of HIV virus in breast milk, dronabinol is concentrated in and secreted in human breast milk and is absorbed by the nursing baby.

ADVERSE REACTIONS

Adverse experiences information summarized in the tables below was derived from well-controlled clinical trials conducted in the US and US territories involving 474 patients exposed to Marinol (dronabinol). Studies of AIDS-related weight loss included 157 patients receiving dronabinol at a dose of 2.5 mg twice daily and 67 receiving placebo. Studies of different durations were combined by considering the first occurrence of events during the first 28 days. Studies of nausea and vomiting related to cancer chemotherapy included 317 patients receiving dronabinol and 68 receiving placebo.

A cannabinoid dose-related "high" (easy laughing, elation and heightened awareness) has been reported by patients receiving Marinol in both the antiemetic (24%) and the lower dose appetite stimulant clinical trials (8%) (see CLINICAL TRIALS).

The most frequently reported adverse experiences in patients with AIDS during placebo-controlled clinical trials involved the CNS and were reported by 33% of patients receiving Marinol. About 25% of patients reported a minor CNS adverse event during the first 2 weeks and about 4% reported such an event each week for the next 6 weeks thereafter.

PROBABLY CAUSALLY RELATED: Incidence greater than 1%.

Rates derived from clinical trials in AIDS-related anorexia (N=157) and chemotherapy-related nausea (N=317). Rates were generally higher in the anti-emetic use (given in parentheses).

Body as a whole: Asthenia.
Cardiovascular: Palpitations, tachycardia, vasodilation/facial flush.
Digestive: Abdominal pain*, nausea*, vomiting*.
Nervous system: (Amnesia), anxiety/nervousness, (ataxia), confusion, depersonalization, dizziness*, euphoria*, (hallucination), paranoid reaction*, somnolence*, thinking abnormal*.

* Incidence of events 3% to 10%

PROBABLY CAUSALLY RELATED: Incidence less than 1%.

Event rates derived from clinical trials in AIDS-related anorexia (N=157) and chemotherapy-related nausea (N=317).

Cardiovascular: Conjunctivitis*, hypotension*.
Digestive: Diarrhea*, fecal incontinence.
Musculoskeletal: Myalgias.
Nervous system: Depression, nightmares, speech difficulties, tinnitus.
Skin and Appendages: Flushing*.
Special senses: Vision difficulties.

* Incidence of events 0.3% to 1%.

CAUSAL RELATIONSHIP UNKNOWN: Incidence less than 1%.

The clinical significance of the association of these events with Marinol treatment is unknown, but they are reported as alerting information for the clinician.

Body as a whole: Chills, headache, malaise.
Digestive: Anorexia, hepatic enzyme elevation.
Respiratory: Cough, rhinitis, sinusitis.
Skin and Appendages: Sweating.

DRUG ABUSE AND DEPENDENCE

Marinol (dronabinol) is one of the psychoactive compounds present in cannabis, and is abusable and controlled Schedule II (CII) under the Controlled Substances Act. Both psychological and physiological dependence have been noted in healthy individuals receiving dronabinol, but addiction is uncommon and has only been seen after prolonged high dose administration.

Chronic abuse of cannabis has been associated with decrements in motivation, cognition, judgement, and perception. The etiology of these impairments is unknown, but may be associated with the complex process of addiction rather than an isolated effect of the drug. No such decrements in psychological, social or neurological status have been associated with the administration of Marinol for therapeutic purposes.

In an open-label study in patients with AIDS who received Marinol for up to five months, no abuse, diversion or systematic change in personality or social functioning were observed despite the inclusion of a substantial number of patients with a past history of drug abuse.

An abstinence syndrome has been reported after the abrupt discontinuation of dronabinol in volunteers receiving dosages of 210 mg/day for 12 to 16 consecutive days. Within 12 hours after discontinuation, these volunteers manifested symptoms such as irritability, insomnia, and restlessness. By approximately 24 hours post-dronabinol discontinuation, withdrawal symptoms intensified to include "hot flashes", sweating, rhinorrhea, loose stools, hiccoughs and anorexia.

These withdrawal symptoms gradually dissipated over the next 48 hours. Electroencephalographic changes consistent with the effects of drug withdrawal (hyperexcitation) were recorded in patients after abrupt dechallenge. Patients also complained of disturbed sleep for several weeks after discontinuing therapy with high dosages of dronabinol.

OVERDOSAGE

Signs and symptoms following MILD Marinol (dronabinol) intoxication include drowsiness, euphoria, heightened sensory awareness, altered time perception, reddened conjunctiva, dry mouth and tachycardia; following MODERATE intoxication include memory impairment, depersonalization, mood alteration, urinary retention, and reduced bowel motility; and following SEVERE intoxication include decreased motor coordination, lethargy, slurred speech, and postural hypotension. Apprehensive patients may experience panic reactions and seizures may occur in patients with existing seizure disorders.

The estimated lethal human dose of intravenous dronabinol is 30 mg/kg (2100 mg/70 kg). Significant CNS symptoms in antiemetic studies followed oral doses of 0.4 mg/kg (28 mg/70 kg) of Marinol.

Management: A potentially serious oral ingestion, if recent, should be managed with gut decontamination. In unconscious patients with a secure airway, instill activated charcoal (30 to 100 g in adults, 1 to 2 g/kg in infants) via a nasogastric tube. A saline cathartic or sorbitol may be added to the first dose of activated charcoal. Patients experiencing depressive, hallucinatory or psychotic reactions should be placed in a quiet area and offered reassurance. Benzodiazepines (5 to 10 mg diazepam *po*) may be used for treatment of extreme agitation. Hypotension usually responds to Trendelenburg position and IV fluids. Pressors are rarely required.

DOSAGE AND ADMINISTRATION

Appetite stimulation: Initially, 2.5 mg Marinol (dronabinol) should be administered orally twice daily (b.i.d.), before lunch and supper. For patients unable to tolerate this 5 mg/day dosage of Marinol, the dosage can be reduced to 2.5 mg/day, administered as a single dose in the evening or at bedtime. If clinically indicated and in the absence of significant adverse effects, the dosage may be gradually increased to a maximum of 20 mg/day Marinol, administered in divided oral doses. Caution should be exercised in escalating the dosage of Marinol because of the increased frequency of dose-related adverse experiences at higher dosages (see PRECAUTIONS).

Antiemetic: Marinol is best administered at an initial dose of 5 mg/m², given 1 to 3 hours prior to the administration of chemotherapy, then every 2 to 4 hours after chemotherapy is given, for a total of 4 to 6 doses/day. Should the 5 mg/m² dose prove to be ineffective, and in the absence of significant side effects, the dose may be escalated by 2.5 mg/m² increments to a maximum of 15 mg/m² per dose. Caution should be exercised in dose escalation, however, as the incidence of disturbing psychiatric symptoms increases significantly at maximum dose (see PRECAUTIONS).

SAFETY AND HANDLING

Marinol (dronabinol) should be packaged in a well-closed container and stored in a cool environment between 8° and 15°C (46° and 59°F). Protect from freezing. No particular hazard to health care workers handling the capsules has been identified.

Access to abusable drugs such as Marinol presents an occupational hazard for addiction in the health care industry. Routine procedures for handling controlled substances developed to protect the public may not be adequate to protect health care workers. Implementation of more effective accounting procedures and measures to appropriately restrict access to drugs of this class may minimize the risk of self-administration by health care providers.

HOW SUPPLIED

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NDC 0054-2601-21: Bottles of 60 capsules.
NDC 0054-2601-25: Bottles of 100 capsules.

5 mg dark brown capsules (Identified RL).
NDC 0054-2602-11: Bottles of 25 capsules.
NDC 0054-2602-25: Bottles of 100 capsules.

10 mg orange capsules (Identified RL).
NDC 0054-2603-11: Bottles of 25 capsules.

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DEA ORDER FORM REQUIRED

Caution: Federal law prohibits dispensing without prescription.

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Columbus, Ohio 43216

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1671 (2/95)

The nation

Pierre, S.D.
Republican state representative Roger Hunt said January 5 that he would sponsor a bill in the legislature similar to one defeated in 1995 that would have banned gay marriages.

Philadelphia
The Philadelphia police department said December 26 that it will advertise in gay publications for gay and lesbian recruits.

San Francisco
Two church congregations were expelled from the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America on December 31 for refusing to rescind their ordinations of gay and lesbian ministers.

Nashville, Tenn.
The National Education Association said January 3 that Nashville teacher Jeffery Hudgins cannot quit the group in protest of its support for Lesbian and Gay History Month until a designated resignation period in April.

Los Angeles
Metro-Goldwyn Mayer Inc. announced January 2 that it would offer health-care benefits to the live-in partners of its gay and lesbian employees beginning February 1.

Alabama
U.S. district judge Robert Varner rejected a lawsuit December 30 filed by HIV-positive inmates in the state prison who objected to mandatory segregation.

Hawaii
A request to invalidate a state commission report endorsing same-sex marriage was turned down by a circuit judge December 22.

The world

Great Britain
A Ministry of Defence committee report proposes lifting the nation's ban on gay and lesbian service personnel, the *Telegram* reported December 31.

Germany
Benjamin Ramos Vega, an alleged Basque terrorist who has AIDS, began a hunger strike in prison December 30 to block his extradition to Spain on murder charges.

China
Ten students in two Beijing colleges tested positive for HIV during medical spot tests, the *Yangcheng Evening News* reported December 25.

South Africa
Venash Moorken and Neil Millard exchanged unofficial marriage vows in Johannesburg on December 29, reportedly making them the country's first interracial gay married couple.

New Zealand
A nine-day-old infant accompanying his mother to a Wellington art gallery displaying the works of Robert Mapplethorpe was refused entry December 15 because the gallery barred children from the exhibit.

Transitions

DIED: Robert Farber, 47, artist, of complications from AIDS December 23 in New York City. Farber's work compared AIDS with other epidemics throughout history.
DIED: Sheldon Green, 51, NASA chemist, of a heart attack December 12 in New York City. Green was an authority on the properties of molecules in outer space.
DIED: Richard Homung, 45, Oscar-nominated costume designer, of complications from AIDS December 29 in Los Angeles. Homung designed costumes for *Nixon* and *Barton Fink*, among other films.
DIED: Lincoln Kirstein, 88, ballet director, of natural causes January 5 in New York City. Kirstein co-founded the New York City Ballet and introduced George Balanchine to U.S. dance audiences.
SUSPENDED: Ben Wright, 63, as pro golf commentator for CBS Sports on January 9 for remarks he made to the Wilmington, Del., *News Journal* last May. Wright was quoted as saying, "lesbians in the sport hurt women's golf" and that women golfers "are handicapped by having boobs."
DISCHARGED: Jeff Getty, 38, from San Francisco General Hospital on January 4. Getty underwent an experimental procedure December 14 in which he received a transfusion of baboon marrow cells in hopes of boosting his AIDS-damaged immune system.

Getty

Politics

A moral debate

By J. Jennings Moss

Senate majority leader Bob Dole may be the frontrunner for the Republican presidential nomination, but for a glimpse into the party faithful's soul and its attitudes about gays and lesbians, listen to long-shot candidate Alan Keyes, a radio talk-show host and former Reagan administration official. During a speech at Florida's Republican convention in November, Keyes said, "We've got to understand that the crisis that we face today is not a crisis of government, and it's not a crisis of budgets. It's a crisis [based] on one fact and one fact alone, that in the last several decades we have cast away from our support for the marriage-based two-parent family. If the family falters, America fails."

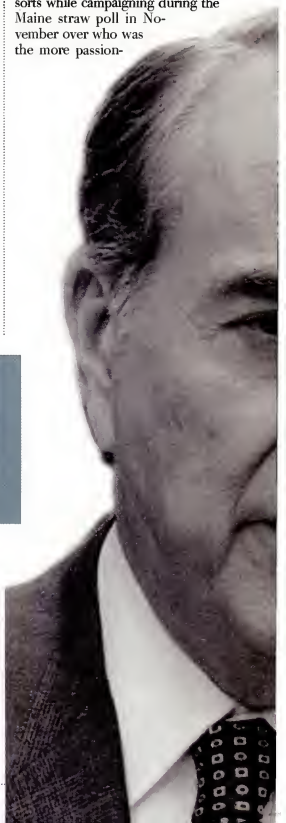
As the nation veers toward the February 12 Iowa caucuses—the official start of the presidential nominating process—Republicans seem torn between their heads and their hearts. They are bitterly split between the Establishment candidate—Dole—and more-conservative contenders whose stances on gay rights and other social issues are more in line with those of the party regulars who have been turning out for candidate debates, forums, and straw polls.

The divide has been developing for months. It was apparent, for instance, at the Florida state convention, where more than 3,300 delegates gathered to hear from the party's presidential hopefuls. Keyes, a fierce antiabortionist who often talks about God in his campaign appearances, was greeted with thunderous applause and was frequently interrupted by cheers. But while the delegates clearly liked Keyes's message, they still selected Dole as their number one choice in a straw poll of the eight men participating. Keyes came in fifth.

While Keyes is the most eloquent deliverer of the message, nearly all of the GOP candidates have included a call to repair America's damaged morality in their stump speeches. Many activists fear that a hard line against gay rights is part of the package.

Dole, for instance, talked about "issues of moral importance, matters of social consequence" when he railed against sex and violence in film last year—an attack that included specific criticism of the gay-themed film *Priest*. Former Tennessee governor Lamar Alexander, who is less strident than most of the other candidates, nonetheless speaks of returning control of the nation's schools to parents, a position activists interpret as a rollback of gay-friendly curricula and school AIDS education programs.

TV commentator Patrick Buchanan and Rep. Robert Dornan of California have long been strident in their opposition to gay rights causes. Indeed, Dornan and Sen. Phil Gramm of Texas got into a contest of sorts while campaigning during the Maine straw poll in November over who was the more passion-



PHOTOS BY KRT

ately opposed to gay rights. And Buchanan's campaign literature contends that "the presidency must become a bully pulpit for traditional values, not gays in the military."

Of all the candidates, the ones who appear least apt to rely on social policy as a way to build votes are Sen. Richard Lugar of Indiana and superwealthy publisher Malcolm "Steve" Forbes. Forbes is the only candidate to stick completely to an economic message. Gone from the race is Sen. Arlen Specter of Pennsylvania, who had actively courted gay men and lesbians but never developed a following among any group of voters. Specter suspended his campaign in December.

Clearly, Republicans—members of a party traditionally built around an economic message—have jumped eagerly into debates on social policy. While several of the candidates have made comments on gay rights, the topic remains a low priority. But when it pops onto the scene—as it did last summer when Dole returned a $1,000 check from the Log Cabin Republicans, a gay group, then said two months later that the action was a mistake—it gets considerable attention.

As a result, questions that analysts will try to answer as they tally up the candidates' delegate totals over the coming months include the following: How far to the right will the conservatives who dominate the nomination process push the party? Can moderates be swayed by a socially conservative message? And what effect will it have on gay rights policy? Once again, Florida's Republican convention may contain clues: It could be that social conservatives will find much common ground with party moderates, setting the stage for the party as a whole to take more stridently antigay stances.

Alexander H. Navarro, a 32-year-old mortgage broker who was a Key Biscayne delegate, wore on his navy blue pin-striped suit one of the rare green-and-white buttons that identified him as a moderate. Navarro said he backed Dole but also said he did not think Keyes went too far with his rhetoric.

"He was excellent," Navarro said. "He pointed out every single issue that needed to be spoken about. If that was extreme, then I guess I'm extreme." Asked about gay issues, Navarro said a person's sexuality should not be an issue and contended that gays and lesbians should be able to marry but not adopt children.

Among the conservatives, who clearly made up the majority of the delegates, homosexuality was perceived as something to be tolerated as long as gays and lesbians stayed quiet about who they are. Many also said government should take steps to discourage homosexuality. "Homosexuality shouldn't be imposed on people," said Lorna Bryan, 50, a

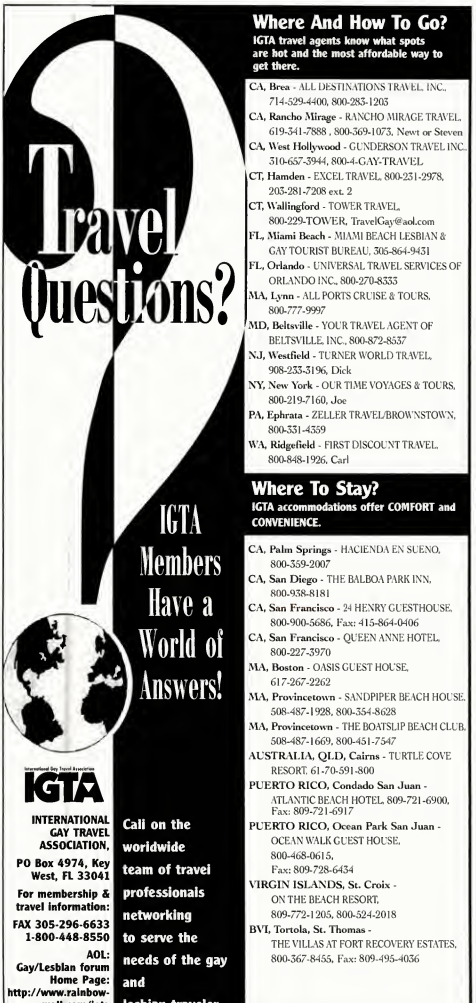
The antigay activists who dominate the Republican Party's nominating process threaten to cost their party the White House

Dole: He steps up his attack on Hollywood, singling out the gay-themed *Priest.*

Buchanan: "The presidency must become a bully pulpit for traditional values, not gays in the military."

Dornan: He got into a contest with Senator Gramm over who was more opposed to gay rights.

Gramm: Expect more antigay rhetoric from him.



Dole delegate from Tamarac who held some Christian Coalition stickers in her hand. "They should do what they want to do, but it shouldn't be taught. I think homosexuals want us to recognize them as people who are special. I'm black, and they want everything I have."

Buchanan delegate William Partridge, 47, of New Port Richey, asserted that "morality has to be probed. The flip side to that is immorality needs to be checked. We need to elevate the moral fabric of America." Another Buchanan delegate, John Savas, 70, of Largo, said that "homosexuals should take hormones to make them either male or female. I feel sorry for them. They're victims of the conspiracy of the Communist new world order."

Gramm supporter Charles Logsdon, whose wife was a Gramm delegate at the convention, said he too disapproves of homosexuality. "I've got a good friend of mine who is homosexual. I tell him, 'I love you, but I hate what you do,' " said Logsdon, who owns his own advertising and design company. Logsdon practically echoed Keyes when he said, "The problem is the moral collapse, the decay of this nation."

On that point at least, archconservative Logsdon finds common ground with Jim Pinkerton, a Republican Party activist who was a senior White House official during the Bush administration. In the past Pinkerton has broken rank with his fellow Republicans to speak out in favor of gay rights and same-sex marriage. But according to Pinkerton, the party rank and file's continuing focus on social issues is well-founded and appropriate. "I don't think they're code words," he says. "They're a realization that the country is coming unglued."

And Rep. Steve Gunderson of Wisconsin, the only openly gay Republican member of Congress, says that so far, he has not seen evidence that the party has gone too far to the right. The real time to judge the party's direction and its nominee will begin at the close of the nominating process with the Republican National Convention in San Diego in August. Says Gunderson: "I learned long ago to ignore party platforms and ignore party primaries because they will strictly drive you crazy." ●

Rush to judgment

Controversy

The killing of a lesbian couple in Oregon is tagged a hate crime before all—or even any—facts are known

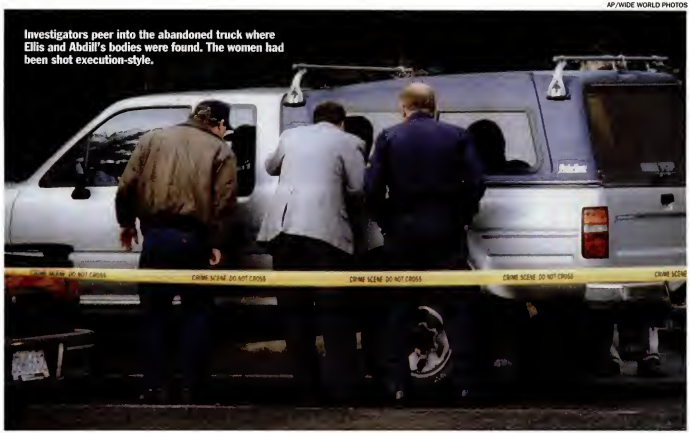
By Inga Sorensen

ACREMANT: HOW I KILLED THEM rang out the headline—big and bold—across the front page of *The* [Portland] *Oregonian*, Oregon's leading daily newspaper. A few days earlier a *San Francisco Examiner* reporter began her story about the December 4 slayings of a lesbian couple in Medford, Ore., with the words, "Just five years before they were

Tragic meeting
Below, from left: Ellis and Abdill; at right: Acremant in police custody

PHOTOS BY AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS

AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS



Investigators peer into the abandoned truck where Ellis and Abdill's bodies were found. The women had been shot execution-style.

Although he reiterated that the shooting had nothing to do with sexual orientation, he said he believes homosexuality is "sick" and admitted, "I don't care for lesbians."

slaughtered and left to rot in their truck…."

There's no doubt about it: The killings of Roxanna Kay Ellis and her lover, Michelle Abdill, had all the trappings of a good story during a slow news cycle. Friends depicted Ellis and Abdill as the ideal lesbian couple, respected businesswomen who were down-to-earth, family-oriented churchgoers. For years they'd been active in the state's bitter fights over antigay initiatives, and in the confusing days before unemployed MBA Robert James Acremant confessed to the crime, activists and reporters alike were quick to speculate that the killings might be antigay hate crimes.

In jailhouse interviews Acremant has said his actions were not motivated by homophobia, asserting instead that the killings stemmed from a botched robbery attempt. He shot the women—as well as a man in an earlier, unrelated incident—he said, because he'd been dumped by his girlfriend, a Las Vegas stripper, and was frustrated over not being rich. "There are too many business grads out there," he told a reporter. "If I had chosen another field, all this may not have happened."

But before Acremant told his freakish tale of Generation X angst, the notion that the killings were hate crimes was Oregon's theory du jour. And the perception dies hard: On December 29, almost a month after the shootings, a Los Angeles group staged an anti-hate-crime vigil to memorialize Ellis and Abdill.

"I've gotten about a dozen angry phone calls from people in the gay community, many of whom accused me of wanting this to be a hate crime—of turning this into something it wasn't," says gay Oregon Realtor Jim Willeford, who was a friend of Ellis and Abdill's. "We simply wanted to point out that there remained many unanswered questions about why Roxanna and Michelle were murdered. We were really making our point to the mainstream media, which seemed eager to play up the botched-robbery motive."

But such fine points were often lost on reporters on deadline. "I had reporters from all over calling me and wanting me to say yes, this was a hate crime," says Robert Bray, a field organizer for the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force. "They wanted an answer straight up or down. We have been very careful about not labeling this a hate crime."

La Verne Lewis of the Portland-based Lesbian Community Project, which runs a hate-crimes reporting hot line, took a similar tack. "I told them," she says, "that we didn't have enough information and that

it was too soon to make any kind of a determination."

Still, scores of press releases issued by gay groups in the wake of the killings closely juxtaposed statements about antigay violence in general with the facts of the Ellis-Abdill case. Said an NCLTF press release issued eight days after the killings: "Our concern is that, however the facts in this case turn out, hate crimes against gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgender persons continue to be an epidemic in this country.... In the atmosphere of hatred and gay-bashing which are expected to be waged by the Far Right during next year's antigay ballot and legislative state initiatives, it is clear that such crimes will increase." The group also sent a letter to U.S. attorney general Janet Reno expressing concern that "these seemingly calculated murders were motivated by hatred towards gays and lesbians."

A December 8 press release from the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation repeated an *Oregonian* assertion that "the women's outspoken stance on gay rights has inspired speculation that they might have fallen victim to a hate crime. Police have at least one report that they had been threatened." The release also quoted Portland-based GLAAD field director Donna Red Wing as saying, "We don't know why Roxanna and Michelle were targeted. Was it because they were lesbian activists or because they were women? Was it a random act of violence? We don't have the answers yet."

A press release issued by an Oregon church the same day quoted gay Metropolitan Community Church official the Rev. Mel White as saying, "Whether or not this murder is a hate crime related directly to the love Michelle and Roxanna felt for each other or to the courage they demonstrated in defending that love, we must not forget: Lesbian and gay Americans are the number one victims of hate crimes across the nation."

Such juxtapositions, say some, influence reporters' thought processes and add to the media feeding frenzy. "Sensationalism is rampant," says Oregon State University political science professor Bill Lunch. "It's not just the tabloid television shows anymore." Increasingly, says Lunch, mainstream media are looking for the sexy, controversial angles for stories. Advocacy groups that work with the media on a regular basis, he adds, should grasp the impact of that change and be sensitive to it.

But activists say their cause can be hurt by failure to publicize their point of view aggressively. A well-known case in point, says gay rights activist Jeffrey Montgomery, president of the Detroit-based Triangle Foundation, is the case of Jonathan Schmitz, who is accused in the killing of Scott Amedure, a Michigan man who confessed during a taping of the *Jenny Jones* television talk show to having a crush on Schmitz. Montgomery contends that the mainstream media labeled the incident the "Jenny Jones murder" and focused attention on the excesses of TV talk shows rather than on antigay violence.

"We issued a statement to try and keep the media focused on the hate-crime aspect," Montgomery says. "But by then it was turning into the 'talk show killing,' in part because of the prosecutor, who was saying he was leading the charge against talk shows. We set out to shift the emphasis away from talk shows."

In the Ellis-Abdill killings, Lunch says, the volatile political environment in the Pacific Northwest could justifiably lead one to suspect the case was a hate-based crime. "In the past," he says, "we've seen serious hate crimes that were not unrelated to the political climate here in Oregon."

"I think in this case the gay community did not act in a reactionary way," says Red Wing. "We're just asking some logical questions." If robbery of Ellis and Abdill's property-management office was Acremant's motive, Willeford says, "then why did money and credit cards go untouched? Why was Roxanna held for several

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hours and then Michelle lured away so they could both be killed together? We wanted to make sure these details didn't get lost."

And in jailhouse interviews Acremant said that after taking the women hostage he eventually surmised that they were lesbians and later confirmed it when he asked Ellis point-blank about their sexual orientation. Although he reiterated that the shooting had nothing to do with sexual orientation, he said he believes homosexuality is "sick" and admitted, "I don't care for lesbians."

Said Acremant in the interview: "Bisexual women don't bother me a bit. I couldn't help but think that she [Ellis] is 54 years old and had been dating a woman [Abdill] for 12 years; isn't that sick? That's someone's grandma [Ellis had a daughter and a granddaughter], for God's sake. Could you imagine my grandma a lesbian with another woman? I couldn't believe that. It crossed my mind a couple of times—lesbo grandma. What a thing, huh?"

Lt. Tom Lavine of the Medford police department says that local police considered the possibility that the killings were a hate crime right from the start and says he erred by telling National Public Radio after Acremant's confession that antigay bias had nothing to do with them. "I sat up in bed that night and thought to myself, *What the heck did I say that for?*" says Lavine.

"We don't know why Roxanna and Michelle were targeted. Was it because they were lesbian activists or because they were women? Was it a random act of violence?"

"I regret it now because [Acremant's story] was the weakest I have ever heard. It just didn't hold water. What ultimately motivated him to pull the trigger? We may never know."

Still, says Lunch, sometimes a cigar is just a cigar. "You can see why people would consider that these were hate crimes," he says. "Still, that doesn't mean that every time a gay person dies, it's a hate crime." ●

Flame OUT

Mick Faulkner: Looking for love in all the wrong places

Crime

How Austin's flashiest gay entrepreneur and man-about-town went down in a shower of fool's gold

By Gary N. Reese

Nouveaux riches have never been met with raised noses in Texas, where tales of oil-patch rags to petroleum riches abound. That may be why Austin seemed like a good place for Michael Lindsey Faulkner, 29, a working-class lad from London with a seemingly endless supply of cash, to make a name for himself. With his rapid acquisition of local businesses, his lavish parties, and his extravagant lifestyle, "Mick" Faulkner appeared to be one of the city's rising new entrepreneurial stars.

Yet his meteoric rise was met in the end with a fall that was even more swift. On December 19 his senior business partner, David Fleming—formerly chief accountant for Express Boyd, one of London's largest travel and freight companies—was arraigned in a London court for the theft from his company of approximately $16 million. The name Faulkner had made for himself became linked to an international embezzlement scheme, laundered money, and ultimately a trail of unpaid debts involving financial ventures in Texas, California, and Florida.

"This is the story of a young man who was given a lot of money and wasn't sure what to do with it," says U.L. Moses, who met Faulkner on Faulkner's first trip to Austin in November 1992. Over glasses of Guinness stout, Faulkner told Moses that he and Flemming were prospecting for investments, including, perhaps, a bar. Moses's Blue Flamingo, a small corner dive that attracts a curious mix of young punk rockers and drag queens, seemed like a good place to start.

"I wasn't that impressed with him at first, but he seemed like a nice guy, and he tipped well," Moses recalls. "He had big plans—lots of people do." Moses held out on the sale, and Faulkner, who soon moved to Austin and set up his own small travel business, began looking at another, larger bar a few doors down from the Blue Flamingo—the Red River Crossing, which was closing after almost two decades.

Located on the seedy eastern edge of Austin's Sixth Street entertainment district, the Crossing at the end of 1994 was drawing little more than sneers from Austin's trendier gays and lesbians, who had fled west to the city's former warehouse district. With what seemed like insane optimism, Faulkner poured hundreds of thousands of dollars into the establishment to turn the dowager of Austin's gay bars into an upscale disco. He gave a face-lift to its facade with lavender paint, purple trim, and pinstriped awnings and transformed the interior with cherry wood paneling, polished brass light fixtures, and a crystal chandelier reputed to have cost $26,000.

The bar celebrated its grand opening in February 1995, and Faulkner christened his new creation DJ's, after Dale Jordan, the bar's rotund and convivial new manager who became a key member of Faulkner's coterie of operatives. Off-duty police chased away the drug pushers on the street outside, valets parked the cars, and a blackjack girl entertained patrons who didn't want to dance. Erotic dancers preened and gyrated on pedestals. Faulkner, always one to join in the fun, slipped $10 and $20 bills into their G-strings and ordered drinks on the house, tipping

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bartenders with $100 bills. The sneers stopped, and the gossip mill began churning in overdrive. Faulkner, though, was just getting started.

Faulkner's next project was to transform a former hamburger joint into a trendy restaurant with a stained-glass skylight. He also acquired a second restaurant, Faulkner's, in Los Angeles; launched a limousine service and a male dancing troupe; and set up entertainment and video companies, which began cranking out porn videos as well as glossy magazines touting Faulkner's various projects. It was all fueled by old family money, anyone who asked was told. But most didn't bother to ask.

Penelope LeFaucheur, Faulkner and Flemming's first business partner in Austin and a fellow Briton with her own travel agency, suspected something was amiss, but their story seemed to check out. "I called Express Boyd in London, and they confirmed that David was in charge over there," LeFaucheur says. "He was their controller. I met their families. We got together on Christmas, holidays, and birthdays. They came to my nephew's wedding."

But something didn't add up. In particular, Faulkner had started billing some top acts for the disco's tiny stage: big names such as Crystal Waters and Martha Wash. His cover charge remained at a preinflationary $3. A similar situation prevailed at Mick's Mix, his Austin restaurant, which boasted a huge staff and excellent food at bargain-basement prices.

"I thought from the beginning that there was something fishy there," says Kerry O'Quinn, former part-owner of the now-defunct Club 404 disco in the city's gay and lesbian neighborhood. "I'm sure the bar was making money, but considering the money they were pouring into it, it couldn't possibly have been paying for itself."

Some regarded Flemming as the source of the business duo's boundless affluence. An effective foil to the young entrepreneur, Flemming, 47, had a personality much more in keeping with what Americans customarily associate with the British: reserved, reassuring, and possessed of unfailing good manners heightened by a cordiality that respected another's boundaries.

"David looked after the businesses," recalls Kelly McKay, who began working as Faulkner's travel agent in the fall of 1993. "Mick was the frivolous one. He wanted to have fun, throw parties, spend money."

They thought and acted like a pair, say friends. Faulkner insisted they were half brothers, hoping that Flemming's old-world class would gain him some legitimacy. But this, like so much else about Faulkner, was a fiction created to hide the truth: that the men had been lovers ten years before, when Faulkner worked for Flemming at Express Boyd.

That was all over by the time the two arrived in Austin, or so most people assumed. Flemming, according to a DJ's employee who wished to remain anonymous, "liked to go outside the bar in the evening and cruise the young men who strolled along the sidewalks. He liked them young, thin, and pretty, but also kind of grungy."

Faulkner acquired a lover in Austin who died, however, in September 1994. Faulkner himself had tested positive for HIV years before, though he did not discuss his health with any but a trusted few. He contributed generously—some would say ostentatiously—to local AIDS charities. In May 1995 he instituted a "charity cover charge" at DJ's, turning over the door's proceeds—advertised to have been $15,000—to Christopher House, an intermediate AIDS care facility; Project Transitions, the local AIDS hospice; and the Texas AIDS Network.

"He was a lovely man, but he had no sense or stability," says an associate. "When Mick surrounded himself with all those flunkies, I severed our business ties."

The party boy had his dark side as well, a brooding he tried to numb with alcohol. "Mick usually came down to the club in the late afternoon, around 4, and sat at the back bar and drank until closing," says the anonymous DJ's employee. "Sometimes he hardly spoke to anyone." Instead, he fed coins into a jukebox

to play his favorite song, "I've Never Been to Me" from the film *The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*. "He would play that song over and over and over," says the employee, "until it drove people out of the bar."

The title of the song was apropos. In his fevered search for himself, Faulkner ratcheted up his spending spree, which many considered already out of control. Some of his associates parted ways with him. "He was a lovely man, but he had no sense or stability," says LeFaucheur. "When Mick started surrounding himself with all those flunkies, I severed our business ties."

Undeterred, Faulkner looked for new worlds to conquer. He began to negotiate the purchase of Parliament House, a gay resort and bar complex in Orlando, Fla. He booked the Village People for an October 1995 club date and engaged country singer Reba McEntire to sing at a private party to celebrate his birthday, also in October, and his commitment ceremony with his new lover, a former male dancer he had hired at his travel agency.

In a climactic bid for public attention, Faulkner loudly pledged more than $25,000 to Christopher House during the 1995 Ripped T-Shirt Party, one of Austin's Labor Day gay pride celebrations. Then he pledged another $25,000, and then another, until the people in the bar were applauding a six-figure donation.

But the caregivers never saw a cent, because Faulkner's financial empire was beginning to collapse more quickly than he had built it up. The week after Labor Day, corporate security for the London branch of AT&T received a tip that Flemming had been diverting corporate funds from Express Boyd, a wholly owned subsidiary of AT&T Global Information Solutions, to pay for unauthorized air travel and male prostitutes, federal court documents state. Investigators found this was but the tip of an iceberg. Checking the books at Express Boyd, they followed a paper trail of the equivalent of $16 million in corporate funds, much of it wired to Faulkner's Austin bank account through the London branch of Thomas Cook Group Ltd.

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October 4, Faulkner appeared in federal court the following day, looking frail and supporting himself with a cane. He was dying of AIDS, he told federal prosecutors, but was willing to cooperate with the government. The man who was ready to drop hundreds of thousands of dollars on his birthday party was in no position to post a $10,000 bond, he said. He listed his available assets—his businesses; his homes, appraised at $640,000; his jewelry; his lavish furnishings; and his fleet of more than 30 automobiles, including five limousines, four Rolls-Royces, and a Ferrari—and agreed to transfer them all back into corporate hands. All he had done, he insisted, was undertake investments with the intent of making money for AT&T.

Some of the gaiety continued at his businesses. The day after his court hearing, the staff at Mick's Mix listed the specials of the day on the eatery's chalkboard: DRINKS SO CHEAP, THEY OUGHT TO BE ILLEGAL! $16-MILLION SHOTS—$1; AT&T MARGARITAS—$1.50.

Yet even in disgrace, Faulkner remained an enigma. Federal prosecutors confiscated his British passport but recommended charges against him be dismissed. Two months after his court appearance, on December 9, Faulkner quietly slipped out of town and the country, returning to London, he said, to spend his last days living with his mother. Attempts to reach Faulkner at his London home were unsuccessful.

"I didn't realize the extent of his medical condition until I saw him at the hearing," says U.S. attorney Robert Pitman, who, with his superior, Chief Prosecutor Ron Sievert, released Faulkner from prosecution once his assets had been transferred back to AT&T. It was an unusual resolution to a federal case and one without a clear precedent or regulation to guide prosecutors. "But it does make sense," maintains Faulkner's criminal attorney, Bill White. "You've got to consider the government's resources. By the time you get this case charged and proved in a federal court, it really is unlikely that the defendant would have survived. So what is there to be gained?"

The government's case was dis-

missed without prejudice, which means that, should Faulkner's health improve, the government could reopen its prosecution against him. Flemming, who reportedly fled to Florida and later surrendered in Amsterdam, has been charged in London with theft and awaits trail. British laws impose a gag order on cases going to trial, and both officials in London and executives at AT&T's London branch declined any comment, citing the legal restrictions.

Faulkner's businesses and remaining assets have been placed in a self-liquidating trust, explains Bob Farkas, a spokesman for AT&T Global Information Solutions in Dayton, Ohio: "That was part of the settlement of the civil suit. As the assets are sold, the proceeds will be remitted to AT&T"–which thus avoids becoming the owner in name of a gay bar and other gay businesses.

While few Austin gays and lesbians may be concerned about the losses incurred by AT&T, some feel betrayed by Faulkner on their own account. Faulkner's enterprises employed more than 200 people, most of them gays and lesbians, many of whom lost their jobs in the debacle. The day after his arrest, the travel agency closed its doors, the limousine service ceased operations, and the dancing troupe changed owners. The bar (renamed Mick's Place) and restaurants continue operating, but only after having downsized their bloated staffs.

"Some [charitable] donations that were promised never came through," adds Craig Edwards, editor and publisher of *Fag Rag*, an Austin gay paper. "The house of cards came down so fast, it left a lot of people feeling bitter."

LeFaucheur saw her own business go under at year's end–in part, she says, because of outstanding debts from her previous financial alliance with Faulkner. But like many others in Austin, she remembers Faulkner with a mixture of rancor and lingering affection. "Yes, he was arrogant and foolhardy," she says. "He was also extravagantly generous. It's a sort of Robin Hood yarn in a way. But what makes it such a tragedy is that he tried to use his money to buy the love and acceptance he never thought he had." ●

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Web of intrigue

The Internet is both a very public and an intensely private place.

Its chat rooms and newsgroups have become global commons, linking individuals who participate in anonymous privacy. The furor over attempts to regulate the Net's content springs from the conflict between two visions of cyberspace—as a public domain and as a medium for private communication. And the semipublic nature of the Net makes it the perfect place to come out—or, as some critics charge, the equivalent of a giant closet. In this special report *The Advocate* explores both ends of the spectrum and the emergence on the World Wide Web of a vital gay and lesbian presence, with Web sites spanning the range from those representing our largest organizations to personal home pages. It is appropriate that so many of us have claimed the Net as somehow our own. Who better understands the creative tension between public and private, between the personal and the political, than we do?

Border control

Law

The latest attempt at censorship on the Internet demonstrates the global nature of the debate

By Erik Ashok Meers

"I think I'm gay," a teenage boy recently wrote in an Internet discussion group. "I have strange, desperate feelings for guys (but not for girls). My reason for posting to this newsgroup is to ask if these feelings mean that I am gay, or just attention-starved, or what?"

Pleas for help with this poignant urgency are made and answered every day in the Internet's gay discussion areas. So gay leaders reacted with alarm when the on-line firm CompuServe blocked access to 200 sexually explicit groups, including ones that offer support to gay teens, on December 23 after a Munich prosecutor threatened to take legal action against the company. "Lumping the gay and lesbian newsgroups in with child pornography and pedophilia shows bias and ignorance," says William Waybourn, managing director of the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation.

Like no technology before, the Internet's anarchic flow of information and discussion has broken down closet doors as well as geographical barriers for isolated gays over the past decade. CompuServe's move, one of the most sweeping acts of Internet censorship to date, highlights the conflicting cultural and political values at stake as a global debate seethes over how—or even whether—to regulate speech on the nationless information network.

The German prosecutor, Manfred Wick, said that the discussion groups and picture databases violated his country's pornography laws. First Amendment advocates in the United States recognize this argument as an effort to enforce "community standards" on a national scale. Since CompuServe is not technologically able to tailor its offerings by country, the company claims that it was forced to ban access for all of its 4 million users in 147 countries. Many gay support groups were associated with pornography simply because they have the word *sex* in their titles. Consequently, German law is effectively preventing CompuServe users from communicating in gay forums over the Internet. The company terms the blackout "temporary." It is negotiating to have some of the nonpornographic groups reinstated and is working on technology that would block its German users' access to the controversial forums.

Wick began his investigation after one alleged incident of transmission of child pornography passed through the CompuServe computer network in late November. "Our investigation is directed against CompuServe," Wick told Reuters. "It deals with distribution of child pornography, and there is concrete evidence of a crime that leads back to CompuServe." The zealous prosecutor then pressured CompuServe to block its users' access to the Internet's explicit discussion groups. But savvy CompuServe subscribers in Germany and the rest of the world can still reach these groups by utilizing different services. "The problem is, people who are ignorant

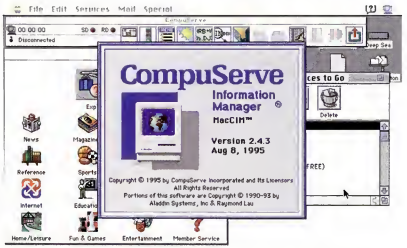
about the Internet tend to be the ones who want to be arbiters," says Karen Wickre, acting director of the San Francisco-based gay computer-users group Digital Queers. "Someone looks pretty silly. In this case it's a Bavarian prosecutor. But this could happen here."

Indeed, nowhere have the cries for censorship been louder than in the chambers of the U.S. Congress. Last summer Congress adopted the Communications Decency Act of 1995 (known as the Exon amendment for its sponsor, Sen. James Exon, a Nebraska Democrat), which would impose fines and jail sentences on people distributing sexually explicit material over the Internet. The measure is attached to the behemoth telecommunications bill that was scheduled for a final vote early in 1996 and that, ironically, calls for dramatic deregulation of the telephone and cable industries.

These First Amendment issues tend to create strange bedfellows in Washington. Conservatives such as House speaker Newt Gingrich have attacked the Exon amendment on libertarian grounds, saying it is "a violation of the right of adults to communicate with each other." Senators as far to the right as Utah Republican Orrin Hatch agree with Gingrich, denouncing the plan as technologically untenable. "It's kind of a game, to see who can be the most against pornography and obscenity," Hatch has said. "It's a political exercise, and I'm against it."

Despite such wide-ranging opposition and regardless of the fate of the telecom bill, federal regulation of the Internet seems irresistible. In the Senate the Exon amendment passed by a vote of 84 to 16. Civil libertarians attribute the huge majority to cynical politicians worrying about appearances, not policy. "We've met with some of these congressmen," says Esther Dyson, chairwoman of the Electronic Frontier Foundation, a lobby for free speech on the Internet, "and they've said, 'Oh, yeah, it's a crazy proposition. But do you think I'm going to vote for porn?'"

The discussion groups banned by CompuServe are on the freewheeling computer bulletin board known as the Usenet. The Usenet allows people to post comments on a breathtaking range and number of topics. Anyone connected to the Internet can reply to the postings. Most of the banned groups were in the "alt," or alternative, area of the Usenet. The vast majority of postings in these areas are sexually explicit exchanges between consenting adults. About one fourth of the blocked groups let users download digitized pornographic images and video clips.



"Someone looks pretty silly. In this case it's a Bavarian prosecutor. But this could happen here."

Until about a year ago, U.S. on-line services such as CompuServe, America Online, and Prodigy provided only relatively sedate content such as magazines and on-line encyclopedias for their subscribers, who pay monthly fees. Then, sensing huge profit margins, the companies began providing access to the Internet, where discussion is extremely open. At the same time, the services have been aggressively signing up foreign users. As the on-line companies vie for the burgeoning world market, the worry goes, the services may be forced—as CompuServe has been—to restrict access to any area of the Net that any government deems offensive. "We do business in hundreds of countries," William Giles, a CompuServe spokesman, told *The New York Times*. "It's a huge global market, and in order to play in each country we have to play by their rules." On December 31, China weighed in by calling for new restrictions on the Internet.

Both sides of the debate stand by their principles passionately. Those in favor of Net regulation believe that they are protecting American children from the vilest forms of pornog-

raphy. And it's true that some of what can be found on the Internet is much cruder than anything one might see in a brown-paper-wrapped magazine at the corner drugstore. They think sincerely–if naively–that the government can control the Internet the same way it has television or radio. More-technologically-informed censorship supporters understand the futility of efforts to root out cyberporn but hope that measures such as the Exon amendment will instill enough fear in users to stifle its spread.

For gays and lesbians, unfettered access to the Internet has a more urgent meaning. "The Internet is a place where individuals can find information that they might be afraid to try to find some other way," says Wickre–afraid precisely because the information is controversial. "One person is not going to like safe-sex information. Another is not going to like positive stories about gay men and lesbians. You can't predict what someone's going to take umbrage at."

Most civil libertarians agree that parents should have the right to block porn from their computers but argue that they should look to the free market, not the government. Already some software companies have developed programs to help parents screen out unwanted material. CompuServe and the other on-line services are racing to install and upgrade existing parental-control features. "People should use a purchased program to control content on their end," says Wickre. "That's fine." But even without parental screens, she notes, sexually explicit material on-line is "not going to come after you. You have to find it, and it's not easy."

There's a saying popular among computer hackers: The Internet views censorship as damage and routes around it. Indeed, the Net–which was designed by the U.S. government during the Cold War to withstand a nuclear attack–has a resilience that many politicians have failed to grasp. The verboten newsgroups will continue to thrive with or without CompuServe. "This is really a revolution in communication," says Nate Zelnick, editor of the *Internet Business Report*. "The big regulatory agencies that have been doling out access to technology for a hundred years are powerless. These laws are completely unenforceable." ●

Gimme shelter

Society

The Internet provides a safe haven for gays to interact. But is cyberspace simply an even bigger closet?

By John Gallagher

When it comes to the Internet, many lesbian and gay activists are true believers. Thanks to the Net, they argue, gays and lesbians can form a virtual community more inclusive and expansive than any gay ghetto–and they'll be encouraged to join it because they can take the first steps in safety, privacy, and anonymity.

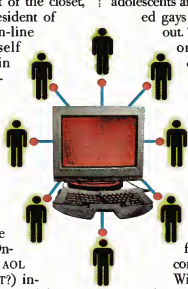
"Over and over again, as closeted people participate in an on-line community with openly gay people, they start the journey out of the closet," says Tom Rielly, president of PlanetOut, a gay on-line service, who himself came out on-line in 1984. "And it happens more quickly than in the real world because of the peer support."

But not everyone is convinced that coming out on-line is an unadulterated good. One folder in a gay message board on America On-line (labeled DOES AOL PROMOTE THE CLOSET?) invites discussion of the possibility that on-line services are the cyberspace equivalent of pre-Stonewall pen pal introductions, "safe, discreet, and totally in the closet." And some activists wonder privately if chat rooms are a kind of virtual tearoom, where married and other closeted gays can be lulled into a false sense of belonging. In short, they say, instead of leading people out, the Internet has simply led them into a different kind of closet.

"The question is, does [on-line exploration of sexuality] contain any psychological significance besides fantasy entertainment?" says Larry Kurdek, an openly gay professor of psychology at Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio. "Cyberspace is such a distorted version of reality, I'm not sure it would increase the possibility of discussion in a face-to-face public setting."

Cyberspace deprives people of what Kurdek calls "multisensory input"–the ability to "judge from body gestures and nonverbal stuff." He also worries that an adolescent questioning his or her sexual orientation might get a distorted view of gay life from sexually explicit chat rooms: "I would hate for someone exploring this part of themselves to get hooked into thinking that being gay is only about being sexual.

"But if the Internet is used as a way of conveying information about community resources," Kurdek goes on, "that is something very different." On-line boosters insist that this is indeed another way in which the Internet encourages people–particularly adolescents and geographically isolated gays and lesbians–to come out. "It provides information on ways for people to come in contact with the community," says Elizabeth Birch, executive director of the Human Rights Campaign, a gay political group, and a former litigator for Apple Computer Inc. "It gives more access points and makes it easier for people to feel more secure about coming out."



With forums on the closet and peer counseling sessions along with contacts for local organizations, the Internet becomes a giant–and anonymous–service center. For people coming to terms with any difficult issue, the ability to lurk and sample without being spotted is a relief.

"In general, of course, it is easier to come out for *anything* on-line," says

Site unseen

The Movement

The World Wide Web is awash with gay sites

By Rex Wockner

Howard Rheingold, a technology critic and author of *Virtual Community: Finding Connection in a Computerized World*, "It is always more difficult to face someone in the real world." Gregory Herek, an openly gay research psychologist at the University of California, Davis, agrees: "You're sitting behind a computer, and people don't have to know who you are."

The problem with analyzing cyberspace and the closet, says Herek, is that even though coming out on-line has become a hot topic, there are no data available on what the process is like or how many people rely upon it. Herek cautions against overestimating how many closeted gays depend on the Net for expression of their identity. "I think it's a rather small number of people who spend their lives on-line, despite what the media hype would lead you to believe," he speculates. "Even if people are using the Net a few hours a week, they still have the rest of their lives off-line."

In all probability, says Herek, coming out on the Internet is not much different from coming out elsewhere. "Most people are out in some aspects of their lives, less in others, and not at all in others," he says. "I would think the Internet would simply add one more dimension in which people might or might not be out."

Yet for people who are forced to remain in the closet elsewhere, Rielly says, the Internet provides an outlet that would not otherwise exist. "There are certain people–married men, military, clergy–for whom it's not practical to be out," he says. "Face-to-face is the best way to have a human interaction, but for a segment of the population, on-line may be the next best thing to being there."

Ultimately, says Herek, if cyberspace is like any other forum for coming out, people will eventually move on. "Some people may get stuck, but many may not," he says. Whatever the venue, "you come out in stages, and it's a pretty big step to form the words *I'm gay*."

The Internet may offer a safe interim step for people wanting to come out. But, Rheingold argues, it does not eliminate the often-wrenching emotional work ahead: "In many ways, finding an 'easier' way to make a difficult statement is a step along the road to doing it the hard way." ●

Call it a Web site. Call it a home page. Call it a URL (for *uniform* or *universal reference locator*). Whatever you call it, if you're a gay organization in 1996, you've got to have one: a welcome station sitting on the Internet's World Wide Web (WWW), waiting for Web surfers to drop in for a visit.

It's obligatory, but how useful is it really? "There ain't shit at most Web sites," says gay San Francisco computer consultant Mike Friedman. "Maybe you need a home page because everyone else has one, but that's the worst kind of reason, especially considering the overhead."

HRC's site is an "action center."

Chris Thomas, publisher of the San Jose, Calif., gay newspaper *OutNOW!*–one of the first to post its news on the Web–agrees. "One of the nicest things about the Web is that it provides the power of publishing to anyone with the right equipment," says Thomas. "But that also means there's just as much mediocre and truly useless stuff on the Web as there is in the publishers' overstock section at Super Crown."

Others argue that the situation, though dire, is improving. "Most organizations' Web pages stink because the people don't understand the medium," says Tom Rielly, president of PlanetOut, a gay on-line service. "They think it is about slapping up press releases with a few scanned pictures. They see it as an end rather than a means. But ultimately, gay organizations are going to find that it is so efficient to communicate this way that they will dedicate more resources. The quality will improve dramatically in the next couple of years."

Already, as Web sites proliferate, site design is becoming more competitive and sophisticated. In many cases, however, designers are merely adding bells and whistles, like jazzy graphics. The best sites, Rielly argues, are interactive. For example, visitors to the Web site for the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), a Washington, D.C.-based gay lobbying group, can plug in their ZIP code and pull up their Congress members' voting records on gay and AIDS issues.

"Our site is an action center," says HRC electronic media coordinator Phil Attey. "You can click to send a message to your member of Congress. It's scripted, but you can edit it, and if the member doesn't have an E-mail address, our political team makes sure the message gets hand-delivered, free. We can get messages out [from constituents] even if we've got only 24 hours to act."

Attey says the HRC site receives 3,000 "hits" per day–more than 5,000 when HRC is "spamming" cyberspace with urgent appeals for action. (A *hit* is each click or keystroke that accesses a document on a Web site. *Spamming* is posting a message on many different Internet mailing lists and message boards [known as newsgroups] to reach a maximum audience.)

"The HRC home page is an example of true Web interactivity," says Rielly. "Over the next 24 months you'll see most gay organizations add interactivity to their Web sites."

A more typical gay site is simply a one-way, one-stop shop for comprehensive information about a group or service. The Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation's site, for example, breaks down into "General Information," "GLAAD Directory," "Committees and Groups," "Volunteers and Volunteering," "Regional Reports," "Media Awards," "Online

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Resources," "Job Postings," "CLAAD Salutes Soaps!" "News," "MediaAlert," and "Media Contacts."

In keeping with Rielly's prediction, however, CLAAD already has plans to "restructure the page to post our activations and alerts on the Web as soon as they come out," says CLAAD information systems manager Loren Javier, "and hopefully provide the community with an easy way to respond to action items by clicking a button and having E-mail set up for them."

As information sources, some of the most useful sites are those that generously provide scores of links to other gay URLs. Two such launching pads are Hein's Ultimate Gay Links, which lives on a computer in the Netherlands, and the Seattle-based CyberQueer Lounge, which functions "like an electronic version of a phone book...containing links to a wide variety of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender information on-line," according to the Lounge's Webmaster, Tom Hicks.

Another launching pad or "jump station" is the WebCastro "Hotlinks." While WebCastro is a commercial operation designed to promote San Francisco's Castro neighborhood businesses, the operators provide non-self-serving material as well. "The heart of the World Wide Web is its ability to link us together," says WebCastro cofounder Dwight Stevers. "We want WebCastro to help with that unifying force that the global gay and lesbian cybercommunity is developing on the Internet."

Not all entrepreneurs in cyberspace are so altruistic, and the commercial side of the Web is growing explosively—with gay and lesbian businesses doing their part. The increasing presence of profit-motivated sites, however, has not yet made exploring the Web an expensive proposition—unless you're a compulsive shopper. Access to almost all Web sites remains free; surfing the Web can cost as little as $20 a month, the flat fee typically charged by direct Internet service providers. Using one of the big commercial on-line services as a gateway means paying about $2.95 an hour on top of basic monthly membership fees.

Costs can be much steeper for those who own a sophisticated Web site. Unless you're willing to learn hypertext markup language yourself, you have to pay someone to design your site and make additions to it. This could cost up to $20,000 at the outset, though most gay organizations manage to avoid that expense by hooking up with volunteer cybergeeks. And a good Web site needs to be updated weekly or more often (or no one will visit it), and that takes manpower. "The cost is not in dollars," says Hicks. "It's in time and energy."

Web sites

Addresses for sites referred to in this article:

HRC
http://www.hrcusa.org
Lets you send a message to your congressional representatives.

GLAAD
http://www.glaad.org
Everything you wanted to know about gays and the media.

Hein's Ultimate Gay Links
http://www.xs4all.nl/~heinv/heindoc/gayhttpl.html
A launching pad based in the Netherlands with links to other gay sites.

CyberQueer Lounge
http://www.cyberzine.org/html/GLAIDS/glaidshomepage.html
Directory assistance for exploring gay and lesbian cyberspace.

WebCastro "Hotlinks"
http://www.webcastro.com/hotlinks.htm
Sponsored by neighborhood businesses in San Francisco's Castro district.

Time and energy, however, are what many gay and lesbian cyberphiles have plenty of. And a simple home page need not require expensive design; indeed, some Internet service providers will assist in setting it up. As a result, along with gay groups and businesses, gay and lesbian individuals are now hanging out their shingles on the Web in increasing numbers. These individual home pages may include a photo, personal information, and links to other sites.

"A home page is a place to express your identity," says Rielly, "the equivalent of the buttons on your backpack, the posters in your dorm room, or the photos on your dresser. When hundreds of thousands of gay and lesbian people are out on the Web, that will be among the greatest continuing shows of power possible for gay and lesbian people as we close out this century." ●

Ends and means

"I WANT YOU TO HELP ME KILL MYSELF" WAS the first thing George said as we sat down outside the Empire Diner. I knew something was up when he called; in ten years we had never seen each other in daylight, much less *done lunch*. It was 80 degrees, and he was wearing an overcoat.

Casually I said, "Sure, honey. When exactly did you want to do this, and do you mind if I ask why?"

Out it poured. He thought he had AIDS. (He did.) He thought he would die horribly and soon. (He would.) He had seen plenty, and he was terrified. He was all alone.

He came to me because he had heard the stories of how my brother, Dave, and I had hastened our stepmother's death—at her prior request and after a long fight with lung cancer. George knew that Dave and I had aggressively overdosed our father on morphine when he gave us the signal as he lay dying of lymphoma. He knew the story of how we had got my good friend the actor Brad Davis out of the hospital to go home to die his way. He knew we had stood by respectfully as our beloved friend Colleen Dewhurst deliberately refused treatment for her invasive cervical cancer. Stuff like this goes on every day in hospitals and homes around America. A few folks actually execute the *Final Exit* recipe, complete with booze, hoarded barbiturates, and the plastic bag—sometimes with hideous results.

George also came to me because he was hopeless. In the end he didn't have to kill himself. (He died of overwhelming infections and rapid wasting.) Before he died he wrapped up his prized projects at work, had it all out with his family, and lived to become lead plaintiff in a landmark right-to-die lawsuit in New York. The new sense of purpose George found in his life that last year buoyed him on the good days. But it was his sure knowledge that he could check out anytime that made the many dark nights bearable, one minute to the next.

Knowing you have the choice of when to die makes a huge difference. After 15 years of AIDS work and hundreds of deathbed vigils (and five years spent at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center), I know there are worse things than death. I fundamentally believe that sometimes it is far more courageous to accept and to expedite a biological end than to fight pointlessly. An abiding sense of ultimate control establishes the bottom line for what one will tolerate in the way of pain, degradation, disappointment, and other people's dramas.

These options work fine for seasoned adults who are inarguably dying, who have fought long and hard medically, and who have discussed this frankly and thoughtfully and repeatedly with their family and doctors (and shrinks and spiritual guides) long before things got ugly. What worries me are folks who don't get the help George did—folks who cannot find their way to a caring and endlessly available doctor, who are not surrounded by friends savvy in the vagaries of life and the harsh ways of death, who throw in the towel simply because they are frightened, alone, or despairing.

Suicide statistics among sick people are misleading because they do not include most assisted deaths of the terminally ill. But we can learn a lot from the outright suicides of people with cancer or AIDS. Most often those who have killed themselves had inadequately managed pain, had a history of depression, were depressed in reaction to some awful event, and did not have a lot of friends. You don't need to be a psychiatrist to realize that what keeps sick people pitching are good pain medications, aggressive anxiety management, a reason to live, and plenty of love—things many people with AIDS don't have.

> I have always been put off by how beautifully we gay people suffer and die.

I'm also concerned that we not romanticize death itself as heroic. As moved as I was by the NAMES Project quilt, as impressed as I was by its sheer public relations value—and as proud as I am to have been one of the creators of the red ribbon—I have always been put off by how beautifully we gay people suffer and die. I constantly remind myself that I admire my heroes who struggled valiantly—like Vito Russo—not for resisting death but for railing against *needless* death. They weren't angry that they were mortal; they were furious that they were being allowed to die. They were driven by righteous indignation, not desperation.

As the debate goes forward, propelled by everyday need and by catalysts such as the film *It's My Party*, we have to recognize two major moral dilemmas regarding suicide and AIDS. First, we have to make sure that people with AIDS get what they need—and that means aggressive control of pain and anxiety, a promise that no one will die alone, and a sacred covenant that they will not have died in vain. Next, we must make sure every dying person knows that they can do whatever they need to do and that we'll stand by them. The question for those of us not facing death at the moment shouldn't be whether we think suicide is OK but rather whether we have done everything in our power to make sure each person knows that his life is precious while he is alive.

McFarlane is the author of Everyday Angels: A No-Nonsense Guide to Caring for the Seriously Ill and the Dying, *scheduled to be published by Simon & Schuster in 1997. He is the former executive director of Gay Men's Health Crisis and of Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS.*

Resurrection

Cover Story

Playing a gay man dying of AIDS breathes new life into the career of actor Eric Roberts

By Gerry Kroll

"The most-asked question of me from the time I was 12 till I was 31 was, 'Are you at least bisexual?' " recalls Eric Roberts. "I was in the theater, so I was always around gay people, and they were always telling me, 'You don't know it, but you're one of us.' "

Clearly, aside from doing some wishful thinking, what those soothsayers were picking up on were some personality traits that typify many gay men: a heightened sensitivity, a feeling of apartness, an alienation from family. And although their prediction about Roberts's latent homosexuality has yet to come true, these same characteristics have now come to the actor's aid, helping him play a role destined to reshape his foundering career.

Growing up in Atlanta, Roberts felt removed from his peers because he was short and painfully shy and had a very noticeable stutter. His father, who established the Actors and Writers Workshop in Atlanta, fostered Roberts's love of theater and found that the boy's stutter disappeared when he recited memorized lines. The joy of a career in the making, however, was offset by a turbulent homelife: Roberts's mother walked out on the family when he was 13, and when she returned two years later, she sued for custody of Roberts's two younger sisters—but, pointedly, not of her son.

Alienation marked his adolescence. "I sub-

GREG GORMAN

ROBERT ZUCKERMAN

Ex-lovers trying to reconnect: Roberts and Harrison in *It's My Party*; (far right) Lee Grant

merged myself in an environment that was black, that was homosexual, that was runaway, that was unhappy," he reflects; "people looking for something they couldn't find."

But acting was a way out, and after studying at the Royal Academy of the Dramatic Arts in London and the American Academy of Dramatic Arts in New York, he started to get roles on the stage. He made a splashy film debut in 1978 in *King of the Gypsies*, and though follow-up movies *Raggedy Man*, *Star 80*, *The Pope of Greenwich Village*, and *The Coca-Cola Kid* were certainly creditable, his career began to derail shortly after he made *Runaway Train*, for which he received an Oscar nomination for Best Supporting Actor. He states matter-of-factly, "I've kind of been lost in the world of B-movie *Mad Max*es since 1986."

Now, with his role in *It's My Party*, written and directed by Randal Kleiser [see profile on page 46], he's found a part that will put him back on track. In the film he plays Nick, a gay man who discovers that he has a rapidly debilitating AIDS-related illness and decides to kill himself. But first he wants to hold a two-day farewell party to tie up loose ends with family members (George Segal, Lee Grant, Marlee Matlin), friends (Margaret Cho, Bronson Pinchot, Roddy McDowall, Sally Kellerman, Olivia Newton-John), and an ex-lover (Gregory Harrison).

Shot in five weeks on a minuscule $3-million budget ("We wore our own clothes," says Roberts), the film, which is scheduled to open nationwide on February 16, is an unrepentant tearjerker about how to forgive, how to let go, and how to move on. Not the least of its merits is a loving, lingering kissing scene between Roberts and Harrison that has already piqued the interest of the tabloids. Says Harrison about the sequence: "I was long past any awkward feeling about kissing or caressing Eric. I really felt a deep love and could hardly wait for that scene. After mooning over Eric, I had all these feelings that had been building up."

Warm praise for the actor also comes from Newton-John. "Eric is a very thoughtful actor," she says, "and I learned a lot from watching him."

Roberts, who turns 40 this year, selected a vegetarian restaurant as the site for his *Advocate* interview, and though he had just returned from four weeks of night shoots in Canada on another film, he looked fit and well-rested. With him was his wife of 3½ years, Eliza, an actress and casting director with whom he shares a Los Angeles home formerly owned by Judy Garland.

The questions posed during the interview were occasionally troubling—particularly those dealing with the actor's complete estrangement from his sister Julia Roberts and those focusing on his arrest in 1995 on suspicion of spousal battery. Although Roberts didn't flinch at the probing, he twice resorted to stealthy puffs on a cigarette—forbidden goods in the health-food restaurant. "The fact is," he mused, "I'm not as well-adjusted as Nick is."

The tabloids said that you insisted on just one take in the kissing scene with Gregory Harrison.

Eric Roberts: I just want to set the record straight right off the bat.

You insisted on 25 takes?

Eric: We did it many times, as I recall.

Well, regardless of your sexual orientation, I imagine it was not unpleasant to deep-kiss Gregory Harrison.

Eric: No, he's a great kisser. And I will always call Gregory Harrison my boyfriend.

Now that you've seen *It's My Party*, what's your reaction to it?

Eric: It's one of the three or four best movies I've ever been in—and the best movie I've been in for quite some time. The first time I saw it, I cried for the last 20 minutes—and I've never cried at my own movies. I'm sobbing, and I'm really embarrassed, because if anyone sees me crying at my own movie, I'll feel foolish. The lights come on, and the 12 people in the room are all crying. So I was very happy to be one of them. That last half hour works on every level.

Did you have any hesitancies about taking on the role of Nick?

Eric: Everybody but my wife told me not to do it: "It's about a homosexual who's dying of AIDS." But to me, yeah, it was about a guy who was homosexual, and he was dying, but—[*sighing*] God!—it was about a love affair gone south, it was about a family that was dysfunctional, and it was about a man who was really special—an artist who was very talented, very bright. It was a great role and a great script. That's all I needed.

Did you find that there was a special sensibility at work, making a film with Randal Kleiser, a gay director?

Eric: The only thing different about this experience is that I had to sleep with the director to get the role.

I don't think I understand. How is that different from all of your other acting experiences?

Eric: [*Laughing*] This is the first time I had to sleep with a *man* to get the part. Actually, the only time it ever occurred to me was the day that Greg and I had to kiss. Here were

PREVIOUS PAGE: STYLING BY CHARLIE ALTUNA FOR JED ROOT WEST. GROOMING BY MARVIN LYNCH FOR CELESTINE: LA

these boring, square heterosexuals, sitting on the edge of a bed, kissing. I realized that most of the people involved with this film were homosexual and all there on the set with us. And there's me and Greg, kissing.

Did Randal Kleiser give you any particular direction about playing gay?
Eric: Randal's most constant direction was "Eric, not so fruity!"
Eliza Roberts: Randal was more saying, "Not so feminine." There was a sort of delicateness at some moments when I saw you on the set, and you weren't conscious of it. And those would be the times Randal would say—
Eric: "Eric, not so fruity." Well, look, after Gregory Harrison was cast, I was at home learning my lines, understanding the background of certain scenes. I felt I had to decide the characters' sexual orientation with each other. Greg is a very Ivy League guy in a sport coat. If you took all the bones out of his body, he still wouldn't look relaxed or feminine—ever. So I decided without discussing it with anybody that he was the pitcher and I was the catcher.

The film will certainly start fanning the flames over the rights of terminally ill patients to commit suicide. Would it be easy for you to let someone you love commit suicide? Your father, for example: I don't know if he was in great pain, but he died of cancer just before *King of the Gypsies* opened.
Eric: It would be a fucking drag, but you take the best option you've got. Why not make it a happy time; why not make it OK to go?

My father, in his dying process, taught me something wonderful, indirectly, and it was the first tool I had to work with going into this project. In watching this very young man die—my father was a little older than I am now—I realized that he would lose all of us and this world as we know it, but we'd just lose him. And he was a lot to me—he was my dad, he was my mentor, he was my teacher, he was my best friend, he was my confidant, he was my world. But he was losing everything. I was losing my father.

Like many gays and lesbians, you have often had a difficult relationship with your family. Was it tough for you to decide to give up pursuing a relation-

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ship with your family of origin?
Eric: There are reasons for that. I was excluded, first of all, before I could do anything wrong, and then as I got older I got both of my sisters out of the South and.... [*A long pause*] I was your basic drug addict. I was not responsible for what I was taking responsibility for. So I made them hate me. And then, when I was going to expose my mother for her lies, my sisters decided I was more trouble than I was worth. And personally, I can't blame them.

Is this break with your family something that you think can be mended?
Eric: Nobody knows. The family that I've been lucky enough to choose has put up with just as much shit from me as my family of origin did. And they're still here to talk about it. And they're also here to reap the benefits of the fact that they've put up with it.

My sisters call me abusive—but they're also the same people who say that I wasn't abused. I have been a volatile asshole for a great deal of my life. It comes from having been raised in an environment with a bunch of volatile assholes. I was out of control.

Are you talking about drug use?
Eric: I'm just talking about behavior. The drug use is intermittently in there, of course. But just bad fucking behavior. "Out of control" is such a catchphrase that it can be used for all kinds of things. Growing up, I had no examples, so I was totally uneducated in social intercourse. And I was such a repetitiously angry young man.

Can you give me a specific?
Eric: I was a prick in my honesty or my dishonesty. I saw it as something else. I saw it as some kind of straightforwardness, freedom of expression.

But given the fact that you've gone through a lot of self-examination and made a number of changes, can't you see the possibility of having a relationship with your mother and with your sisters in the future?
Eric: Oh, I hope I have one with my sisters! They're both swell gals. My mother, I'm kind of indifferent about. When Julia got meningitis—this was at the time my sister lived with Liam Neeson—was the first time my mother and I had seen each other since I was 14. It was all very civil. And I restrained myself from being the asshole I love to be whenever I hear my mother's voice or her name or see her presence. I was quite fine. But it doesn't change the fact of what she is.

I have an idea: Let's get back to *It's My Party*. This film is far more poignant and valuable than analyzing my family. My family is not poignant, and my family is also not valuable to the public as an example, whereas this movie can help some people. My family and I don't speak, we don't see each other, we don't know each other, we don't work together, we don't play together. And one way or another, the four of us in my immediate family of origin are all equally responsible for it. So there's no fingers to point, there's nobody to blame, it's just the way it is. Hopefully, the love between my sisters and myself will prevail, and I have infinite faith—knock on wood—that it will.

How do you think *It's My Party* compares to *Philadelphia*, another film dealing with gay men and AIDS?
Eric: Philadelphia was not the story it was supposed to be on film. Goddamn it, it could have been, in a big way! It had a lot of money behind it. It had a lot of names behind it. It had a lot of talent in it. And they chickened out. And it makes me angry.

Tom Hanks deserves several ungiven Oscars, so don't get me wrong here. I think Tom Hanks is remarkable. But they put a trophy in his hand for a very good performance in a film dealing with an issue that was not explored. I'm not bad-mouthing him, I'm bad-mouthing how they reward such half-assed attempts in this industry. If you look like you're doing the right thing and you're supposed to be doing that and it's profitable, then they're going to give you a trophy.

Have you had discussions with gay actors about their decision to remain in the closet?
Eric: Yes, and that decision rules for a long time in their lives. It's awful. Why should that rule? But it does. Everything these days is economically based. How do I say this so I don't sound glib? When it becomes profitable to be openly gay, it will be fashionable. If it's profitable, it's in. If it's not, it's not.

Have you taken an HIV antibody test?
Eric: Yes. In my 20s I was a very young and very virile movie star. And I was out there. So in not knowing the incubation time for HIV, I didn't know about myself.

Were you scared by the possibility of getting a positive test result?
Eric: No. For me it was, "I'm going to take the test because I should take the test, but it'll come back negative." Now I'm not out there sexually. I have an old lady, I'm married, and we're monogamous.

How attractive do you think gay men find you?
Eric: It all depends on what you're looking for. If you're looking for a beat-up ex-pretty boy, I'm right up there, because I'm pretty beat-up.

Did you ever find yourself attracted to another male?
Eric: As a kid I'd be attracted to men to the point where I'd want to emulate them. But as far as a sexual attraction, it just doesn't occur to me. It's not like I have to fight it, shouting, "I'm not gay!" It just doesn't occur to me. When somebody says, "You can't knock it till you try it," it comes across to me like a cartoon.

For several years you were lovers with the actress Sandy Dennis. Did you ever discuss her lesbian relationships?
Eric: Yes, she talked about them. We were together from when I was 21 to 27, and she'd tell me everything. At 21 it was risqué for me to hear these stories: "Wow! Really?"

It was a sort of heterosexual turn-on, imagining two women together?
Eric: Let me tell you a little story. I lost my virginity to two women at the same time. And it's the last threesome I ever had. I had hair under my arms, but I was very young. And here is where I expose myself as being a really redneck square: I look back to that encounter when I lost my virginity, and it didn't occur to me to see the two women together. It occurred to me, *How can I keep them both busy at the same time?*

As a man, of course, I've seen women together in pornography, but

two's company, three's a crowd. And I would get distracted, and I'd be embarrassed if I got distracted.

So, bringing this back to Sandy Dennis...
Eric: As all lovers do, you talk about your past.

Was she a bisexual?
Eric: Sandy appreciated the beauty of women. But Sandy also liked and appreciated what a very, very young man could do to a woman, I suppose.

About three years ago, Eliza, you made news when you were instrumental in the arrest of a man who was molesting boys who are friends of your daughter. Was there any confusion in your mind between child molesters and homosexuals?
Eric: It's not confusing. It's a completely different element.
Eliza: In fact, one thing that Eric tried to bring out when we were being interviewed at the time is that most pedophiles are not gay. This guy in our neighborhood was an exception. He happened to be a gay male.

As was Victor Salva, the director of *Powder*, who was so recently in the news.
Eric: I made a movie with Victor just before *Powder* called *The Nature of the Beast.* Since you brought it up, I'll say that had I known Victor was a pedophile, I would not have made that movie. Victor didn't lie, but he lied by omission.

This is obviously something that upsets you enormously.
Eric: If a man is going to videotape his sex life with a boy, it makes me nauseous. It makes me feel very vulnerable, and I'm not a vulnerable guy.
Eliza: Eric really encouraged me to call the parents of the victims and offer them some guidance. He was like, "If there's any help that could be extended to these kids, it cannot be extended if it's kept a secret." When you're a victim or associating with victims, you also start to feel guilty, like you've done something wrong. You feel like maybe you should keep your mouth shut. And I started to fall prey to all that. Eric really helped me keep my eye on the ball.

Last February you were again both in the news when Eric was arrested on suspicion of spousal battery. Many gays and

lesbians, unfortunately, are in physically abusive relationships and see no way out. I realize this is a sensitive subject, but it would be extremely helpful if you could discuss what happened and what you learned from the incident.

Eric: If I talk about it, it sounds like a man trying to defend himself. And I don't really have anything to say in my defense. I defer to Eliza.

Eliza: Well, I saw it all as an eruption that makes you see. It's like an earthquake: It shows you where the weaknesses in your house are.

Maybe you could just start by telling us what happened.

Eric: I was having a fight with my agent on the phone, and I was leaving the house, and Eliza told me she didn't want me driving in that shape. She grabbed the back of my pants, so I dragged her across our living room floor, heading out the door. Trying to get her hands out of the back of my pants, I swung my script bag and hit her and then left the premises.

Eliza: Then I called 911. I had never dialed 911 before. But at that moment I was frightened. I didn't think Eric was going to hurt me; I was frightened for *him.* He was in a very agitated state, and I was afraid for him to drive. The truth is, he's gotten behind the wheel of a car in that state before, and every single time, he's gotten into some kind of accident, and I didn't want him to get hurt or hurt somebody else.

Eric: I drove around the block, thinking, *This is insane, I have to go make good with my old lady.* I drove back, made good with her, but then the police showed up.

Subsequently, Eric, you were arrested and taken down to Los Angeles County Jail. What happened there?

Eric: Everything from people asking me for autographs while I was in the holding cell to people calling me a wife beater.

Was there pressure on you, Eliza, from friends and family to leave Eric?

Eliza: Yes. But I sat down with myself and thought, *Is there an escalating pattern of abuse here?* There wasn't, which is why no charges were brought.

You went into couples therapy?

Eliza: Yes. It was very important to get into a therapist's office, to sit quietly and listen to Eric talk about what he experienced that day and then for him to sit quietly and listen to me. Therapy is something that no one should ever say no to.

What did you learn?

Eric: The behavior that is abusive comes out of a child in us that feels frightened or scared. But the problem is, it doesn't translate: A big grown man, when he's in that child state, is a big grown man doing it; he's not a hurt child. I realized I was hurting myself. You don't mean to abuse anybody around you. But as you hurt yourself, you hurt other people.

Eliza: I began to understand that anybody who is a battered woman was a battered woman before she ever became a woman. You can count on that. The syndrome started in childhood. And for the batterer the syndrome also started in childhood.

Did you talk about splitting up?

Eliza: The reality is, if Eric and I broke up, we would not take leave of those roles that we've obviously played our whole lives. It's not a solution. Instead of saying, "Oh, this is a repetitive relationship; therefore, it's unhealthy," the new thinking is, "You repeat because you're trying to work out your stuff." If you work it out right, you may actually move on and progress.

Eric: Whenever I would get in those states, what I was doing was repeating what was done to me. But I was doing it to everyone around me as well as myself. It's a place I don't like to go; and it's a place I don't like to have to come back from.

So something very good has come out of something very bad?

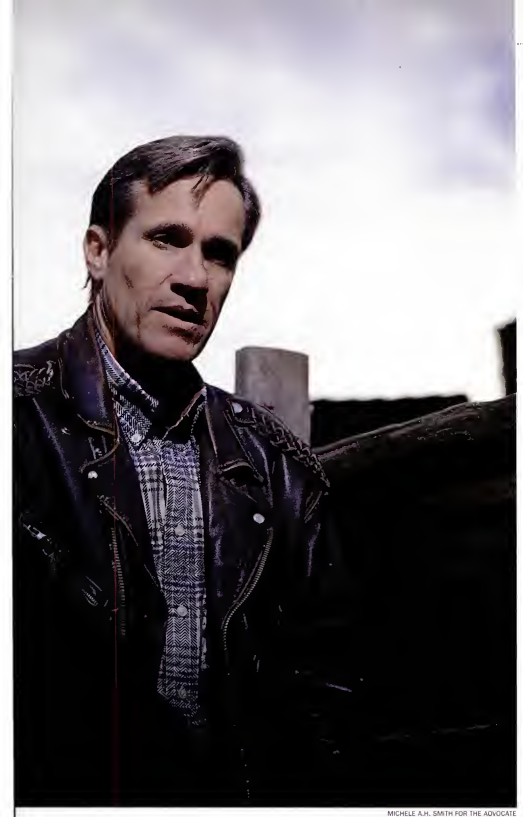
Eric: Therapy has done me good. It's all about learning one's own signals and just dealing with it on the ground level. It's just understanding what sets you off and being ready to be ready to not be set off.

All my life I've been told, "You're an angry asshole who hurts other people." I realize more and more how much I've hurt myself, both emotionally and physically. The past two years of my life—I was a late bloomer—have basically been spent calming down. ●

Life of the party

Cinema

Director Randal Kleiser comes out—with a film inspired by the AIDS-related suicide of his longtime lover



MICHELE A.H. SMITH FOR THE ADVOCATE

By David Drake

"Having seen all these people around me die and doing all these movies about children and animals, I just had to switch gears and deal with this in a way that I hadn't seen anybody else do," says Randal Kleiser of his new gay-themed movie, *It's My Party.* Best-known for directing the high-profile films *Grease, The Blue Lagoon,* and *Big Top Pee-wee,* Kleiser has seldom focused his lens on matters as serious as AIDS and suicide, but those two subjects are precisely what propelled him to write and direct *It's My Party.* "Even if it were only on Super 8 with a bunch of actors at the house," he says, "I just had to do it."

However, in the course of bringing this compelling story to the screen, Kleiser finds that—while he has never been closeted—for the first time he is dealing openly with the media about his own homosexuality. "I've never hidden being gay," Kleiser says in his soft-spoken manner. "And I never pretended to be straight."

Although he is more comfortable discussing his career than his private life, Kleiser does acknowledge that *It's My Party* is inspired by personal experience. In fact, he adds, the film's story and characters are based on the events and people in his own life—most important among them Kleiser's longtime lover Harry Stein, who committed suicide after a serious bout with an AIDS-related brain disorder commonly referred to as PML. "The movie is not only for Harry," he says, "but also for all my friends, all those people on the Wall."

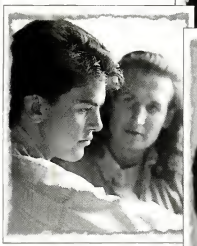
The "wall" Kleiser is referring to is one of *It's My Party*'s most arresting personal details: a homemade shrine for nearly 30 gay men lost to the epidemic. "It was based on an idea that Harry had," Kleiser says. "He'd made a cross on a wall by writing the names of all the people he knew who had died. In the film, though, I added photos because it was more visual."

And *visual* is Kleiser in a nutshell. The eldest of three sons, Kleiser says his interest in filmmaking was first sparked as a child, after his father took him to see *The Ten Commandments.* "The theatricality of it, the control, being the magician on a huge scale—I could tell the director had created that," he says. "The parting of the Red Sea was definitely the scene where I thought to myself, *I want to do that.*"

But all this is not to say that Kleiser is a control freak. Quite the contrary, notes actor Gregory Harrison, who plays a fictional version of Kleiser in *It's My Party.* "To have the director of your movie judging your performance of you playing the director of the movie—well, it's just not an easy situation," says Harrison. "But I knew it would never be a problem with Randal. He's far too sensitive a soul and far too much of a gentleman to ever let that sabotage what I was doing. He did just the opposite. He encouraged me to bring as much as possible to the character."

Raised in Philadelphia, Kleiser went on to attend the University of

Coping with AIDS?...



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Southern California as a film studies major, paying his way through school by acting in TV commercials ("My Gulf Oil ad ran for five years!" he jokes proudly). But the 49-year-old director says that being an actor didn't suit him—"I didn't like being told what to do"—though he eagerly accepted background work as an extra to absorb everything he could about making movies. (Push the pause button the next time you rent *Camelot, Thoroughly Modern Millie,* or *Hello, Dolly!* and you might catch Kleiser's golden-boy smile lighting up any number of period-costume crowds.)

His most successful early efforts at directing came in the sphere of made-for-TV movies, culminating in the Emmy-winning 1977 drama *The Gathering.* The subject matter eerily foreshadowed *It's My Party* in that the film dealt with a dying man's efforts to reestablish relationships with his family before it's too late. The TV film featured performances by two actors who also appear in *It's My Party:* Gregory Harrison and Bruce Davison.

Kleiser's first feature film as a director, *Grease,* was a phenomenon. "I'm grateful I did all that work as an extra in those musicals," he explains. "It's where I learned how to make them." The top-grossing film of 1978, *Grease* consecrated John Travolta's *Saturday Night Fever* promise into full-fledged movie stardom. It also helped transform Olivia Newton-John into someone the world has been hopelessly devoted to ever since.

"Randal makes everyone feel calm and comfortable like no other director I've ever worked with," Newton-John says. "He has a quiet control of the set, and because of that things are tension-free."

Surprisingly, *Grease*'s success made little impact on the young director. "At the time I didn't realize it was that big," Kleiser earnestly recalls, "because I had no understanding of what grosses were or what a per-screen average was. I never paid any attention to that. So when the studio told me what the opening day brought in, I said, 'Is that good or bad?'" The question is easy to answer today. Not only does *Grease* remain on the top 20 list of biggest

moneymakers, but it also bumped *The Sound of Music* as the top-grossing movie musical of all time.

Although Kleiser seems to be as unconcerned about *It's My Party*'s financial success as he was about that of *Grease*, actor Eric Roberts, who plays the lead role in *It's My Party*, hopes the film will do well so the director will get the attention he deserves. "Randal should get an Oscar nomination for this film," says Roberts. "I just don't think he'll get it unless this movie grosses ten times what it cost to make."

Of course, commercial success has never been Kleiser's top priority. *The Blue Lagoon*, his next film after *Grease*, starring Brooke Shields and Christopher Atkins, was not a blockbuster. Kleiser says that what drew him to option Henry D. Stakpoole's novel of the same name was its sense of emerging sexuality. "What if no one taught you anything about sex? How would you feel about it?" Kleiser asks rhetorically, underscoring his idea that "sex would be a very natural thing."

ROBERT ZUCKERMAN

Kleiser (right) directs the cast of *It's My Party*.

The waves of *Blue Lagoon*'s bittersweet sexual discovery gave way to a maturity of choice and sexual fluidity in the only original screenplay (aside from *It's My Party*) that Kleiser has written and directed: 1982's *Summer Lovers*. Something of a cult film now, it starred Peter Gallagher and Darryl Hannah as an American couple on holiday in the Greek islands who become entangled in a modern ménage à trois with an exotically beautiful native played by Valerie Quennessen.

"It's a fantasy that a lot of straight guys have," Kleiser says. However, the situation that inspired him to write the movie was actually gay. "I'd gone to the Greek islands and, based on some experiences I'd had

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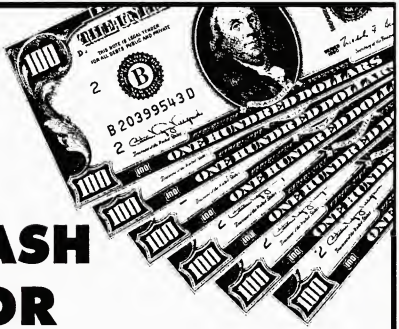

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there..." Kleiser says, laughing. "Well, it was not about two women." That was in the late '70s, when, Kleiser justifies, "everyone was experimenting, including me."

It was during the making of *Summer Lovers* that Stein entered Kleiser's life. Stein was hired in Los Angeles as an on-location production assistant primarily because he spoke fluent Greek—a skill that gave him an edge in the tricky process of obtaining film permits on certain islands. "Harry solved all our problems," Kleiser says. Was it during the filming that they fell in love? Again, Kleiser is tentative: "I guess so. Yes." Then, after a pause of considerable length, he pridefully bursts out, "We were together for eight years."

If the making of *It's My Party* at times felt, as Kleiser says, "like a therapy session—psychodrama on a big scale," the project as a whole has settled at a deeper personal level for its creator. "It was a completion," Kleiser says simply. Of course, public consumption of the movie is another matter. "Making the film was not difficult, but releasing it is," he says. "I'm more apprehensive than excited because I just don't know how it will change everything, like how I relate to people and how they relate to me. Because now they're going to know a lot more about me than I know about them." ●

Waiting to expire

I WENT TO SEE *WAITING TO EXHALE* IN MIAMI Beach, where about two thirds of the audience were waiting to expire. Long known as God's Waiting Room, the little sandspit across the bay is experiencing the kind of renaissance the Medicis would have enjoyed, and they would really have liked to get their hands on some of the drugs. In the lower half of town, South Beach, everybody who isn't gay is Eurotrash, and everybody who isn't Eurotrash is Latin and a print model, and everybody who isn't Latin and a print model is an old Jew wandering around wondering why all these people are making all this noise all of a sudden. Oy.

Just to liven things up, every now and again one of those sexual Ringling Brothers shows called a circuit party arrives in town, and thousands of boys from all walks of life descend for a weekend bacchanal, the theme of which is something really profound, like "White."

People stay up all night and crowd the movie houses by day, which is wise ever since we found out that melanoma is not our friend. So it was that several hundred of them got to experience *Waiting to Exhale* with several hundred Miami Beach old-timers, and when we talk old-timer in Miami Beach, we're talking *old*. There were so many people with walkers that, for the moment before they opened the doors, a casual passerby might actually have thought that somebody was staging a race. Popcorn sales were light because not many in the crowd could still chew. The gay boys had bought every item containing sugar, so pickings at the concession stand were slim.

The picture was delayed while everyone got seated and reseated and rereseated. The trailer for *Nixon* drew shrieks of laughter from the gay crowd (for camp intensity it rivals *Mommie Dearest*) but—get this—there were loud, hacking, vociferous boos from the old-timers. They always hated Nixon, these retired Northern liberal Democrats. And they may have forgotten their phone numbers, but they remember how much they hated him.

Then *Waiting to Exhale* came on—a picture in which the entire cast is black and middle- to upper-middle-class and no one ever says "nigger." But they do say "faggot" four times. We shall overcome, indeed. To be fair, it's a teenager who says it, and his mother tells him to watch his language. She could have told him more, but she doesn't. There were no boos from our crowd or any other crowd, but by then I suspect they'd been narcotized by the beautiful sunsets and the beautiful music and the beautiful women.

The men aren't bad either; but, of course, this is a picture about four women, so the men have to embody everything that's wrong with their lives. There isn't much else wrong. These gals greet every day with a full face of makeup and the sort of drag Ross Hunter would have green-lighted with enthusiasm for any Doris Day picture. It would have spiced things up if one of them had been a lesbian, but that kind of bonding is outside the scope of this film.

Instead, bisexuality is introduced via an ex-husband who returns to confess all to the mother of his child, then leaves again. While the ex-wife, played charmingly by Loretta Devine, never holds it against him, it plays disappointingly into the tenor of male-bashing that defines the movie. Bisexuality is something else that's wrong with men. Although to a straight woman, I suppose, it legitimately *is*. Duh.

The bonding goes on and on in *Waiting to Exhale*. It's a sort of *Fried Chocolate Tomatoes*. There has been a spate of gay plays and films lately that touch on bonding, but the bonding doesn't seem to be about being gay. It's generally about experiencing loss. For pure gay bonding all we have is Gay Pride Month. And we're not terribly kind to one another after that.

The bonding goes on and on in *Waiting to Exhale*. It's a sort of *Fried Chocolate Tomatoes*.

When the last Whitney-Aretha-Chaka shriek had been shruk and the movie was ending, the crowd made its creaky, lumbering way into hot, humid daylight. The smokers, who had spent two hours waiting to inhale, elbowed their way to the sidewalk. And then I noticed something: Some of the people with walkers—in fact, quite a few of the people with walkers—were not old-timers at all. They were new-timers. They were gay men in various stages of AIDS-related illnesses. You don't see them much at night in Miami Beach, which is when the whirl of trend is at its windiest. At night everybody on South Beach is 22 and just got here six months ago from Des Moines or Minneapolis or Kansas City. It's what San Francisco was like in the '70s, the period chronicled so brilliantly by Armistead Maupin in *Tales of the City*.

By day you notice that not everybody on South Beach is 22. They may have just gotten here, but many of them have come because it is the home of the last party, and they want to party because otherwise they will spend the rest of their time on earth just waiting to exhale.

In this regard they are like the retirees who came before them. And the retirees know this. They live in the same buildings, shop in the same markets, and, on this bright afternoon, go to the same movies and help one another out the door. It's bonding, and it's worth noting, because it will probably never make it into a big-time movie.

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Reviews

By Emanuel Levy, Matthew Hays, Barry Walters, Karen Wickre, Anne Russo, James Earl Hardy, Leslie Belzberg

ALEX BAILEY

McKellen's Richard rules the screen.

King of pain

Film

Richard III directed by Richard Loncraine (United Artists)

Reviewed by Emanuel Levy

"I want to look a little bit like Clark Gable and a little bit like Vincent Price," Sir Ian McKellen has said about his modern interpretation of Shakespeare's *Richard III*. Indeed, sporting a mustache that's part Gable and part Hitler along with a frightening look that would make Price proud, the dapper McKellen commands a unique kind of authority, at once menacing and charismatic.

Although it's directed by Richard Loncraine, McKellen's fingerprints are all over this film, which is based on his acclaimed stage production. McKellen cowrote the screenplay (with Loncraine) while touring with the play, then devoted two full years to selling the project. Seeing his vision make it to the big screen intact, without compromise, is in itself a major achievement.

McKellen has shrewdly transplanted the ornate medieval tale of family feuds to 1930s England, with specific allusions to Hitler and the

"Quote unquote"

KEVIN MAZUR/REUTER

"I'll never marry again. I prefer being with my men friends playing golf, playing tennis, and talking about things men talk about."

George Clooney, in the January 2 issue of the Globe

"Not that I know of."

Willie Nelson on The Howard Stern Show *January 2, answering the question "Have you ever made love to a man in this lifetime?" which Stern posed after hearing that Nelson had recorded the song "Cowboys Are Frequently Secretly Fond of Each Other"*

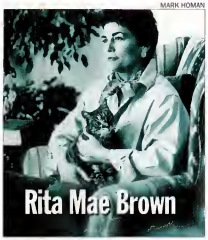
"When someone is lapping on your labia, the last thing you want there is an earring."

Sandra Bernhard, on the downside of body piercings, during a Los Angeles show with her band, the Scrap Ons

Home entertainment

The famous and infamous review their private hit list

MARK HOMAN



Reading: *Rites of Spring: The Great War and the Birth of the Modern Age* by Modris Eksteins. It's a look at how modern life sprang from World War I. I go to two periods in history over and over, because I think they affect every single thing we do: the French Revolution and World War I. Also *The Lost Diaries of Frans Hals* by Michael Kernan. It's a historical conceit, a first novel. I'll be the first to admit it has big holes, but that's not always the worst thing. It's really wonderful.

Listening: Sophie B. Hawkins. She's a wailer. What I listen to most is Bach, Gregorian chant, and Russian church music. I need something that's going to take my mind through a whole series of adventures, and pop tunes don't do it. But I think Sophie's stuff is very imaginative, and she's just at the beginning of what I hope will be an extremely fertile time.

Watching: *Pulp Fiction*, which I thought was erratic but brilliant. I adore John Travolta, always. He has this sort of sluggish exterior that fools you, this almost lumpish quality, and then all of a sudden he'll strike. He's honed it to an extraordinary craft. I also liked *Go Fish*. I like anybody that takes a crack at it, anyone that's brave enough to look at our lives. They're lives of great variety.

rise of Nazism. The modern setting not only works but also makes the play more accessible to today's audiences.

The epic saga begins with a bloody battle in which Richard conquers his opponents and kills Prince Edward. In the ensuing victory party, Richard takes center stage and recites the famous monologue "Now is the winter of our discontent...." This speech begins in public, then continues in the lavatory, where Richard addresses the camera directly. That's a risky device in film, but in this case the commentary that Richard provides, disclosing his power schemes and intrigues, works wonderfully to implicate us in his plot.

Of course, this kind of rendition wouldn't be effective if it didn't feature a truly dazzling performance. And Sir Ian, knighted in 1990, aptly demonstrates why he is so rightly considered one of Britain's foremost actors.

McKellen plays Richard as the dark heart of a royal family, a black-shirted tyrant who's physically deformed, with a hunchback and a withered left arm. As a fighting soldier, he conquered his disabilities, finding glory on the battlefield. Now, in the dreary calm of peacetime, he conceives of a far more ferocious, far less honorable war—for the crown. Two allies are enlisted to aid in this treachery: the greedy duke of Buckingham (Jim Broadbent) and James Tyrell (Adrian Dunbar), a corporal who becomes Richard's ruthless henchman.

Self-conscious, Richard mocks his own ugly visage. But he strikes himself a bargain: If he can't be accepted as a great lover, he will excel as a great villain. Richard's wiles aren't wasted as he woos and wins Lady Anne (wonderfully played by Kristin Scott Thomas), the widow of the very man he killed to gain the kingdom for his brother. Later, after plotting to rid himself of Lady Anne, who has become a pathetic pill-popping addict, he marries Princess Elizabeth, the daughter of Queen Elizabeth and the late King Edward.

Richard III is conceived as a gangster saga—the rise and fall of a Machiavellian thug who becomes a victim of his own ruthless power. Loncraine unfolds the complicated tale in a staccato pacing; this may be the briskest Shakespeare ever filmed. One might complain that a more modulated rhythm would have benefited the quieter and sadder moments. But the combination of a machine-gun pace, energy, and visual flair more than compensates.

Like most British films, *Richard III* is populated with a wonderful ensemble of stage actors, including Nigel Hawthorne as Richard's brother, Clarence, who's assassinated in the bathtub; and Maggie Smith (sans makeup) as the long-suffering duchess of York. However, there are two inexplicable casting errors: Annette Bening as Queen Elizabeth and Robert Downey Jr. as her brother, Earl Rivers. Too American in appearance and speech, they stick out like sore thumbs in an otherwise coherent production.

But these are minor faults, considering the magnitude of the film's scale and its splendid art deco design. The ominous sets, designed by Tony Burrough, often dwarf the

ALEX BAILEY

McKellen (left) is a royal pain in the throne.

humans who inhabit them, but they never take precedence and never overwhelm the text, for which McKellen shows utmost respect.

Clocking in at a mere 104 minutes, this *Richard III* is shorter than Sir Laurence Olivier's celebrated 1955 version by almost an hour, but this stripped-down film pulsates with audacity and gusto. Don't dismiss this movie as yet another British vanity production. Its new setting highlights even more the timeliness of Shakespeare's cautionary tale of the corruption and abuse of power.

Twister

French Twist directed by Josiane Balasko (Miramax)

Reviewed by Matthew Hays

Americans have always relied on French filmmakers for lessons about sex. It has been some 18 years since *La Cage aux folles*—an ongoing crossover sensation that continues to spawn sequels and remakes—offered up its comic lessons on sex and family roles. Now Josiane Balasko, director and star of the European box office smash *French Twist* (known more pithily in French as *Gazon maudit*, or "pussy"), has arrived this side of the Atlantic with a new lesson on sexuality in her farce about colliding sexual orientations.

As with *La Cage*, the stereotypes are served up early in Balasko's film. Laurent (Alain Chabat) is a philandering husband who slips away from business meetings to cellphone lame excuses to his adoring wife, Loli (Almodóvar star Victoria Abril). Meanwhile, his hands are on every female in sight: his clients, secretaries, the baby-sitter. For her part, Loli appears thrilled to stay home and take care of house and children—until MariJo (Balasko), a dyke of the diesel order, arrives to annihilate this nuclear-family bliss.

After the women's first chance encounter, MariJo is so taken with Loli that it's impossible not to root for her, hoping she'll win this housewife's heart and rescue her from her dreary suburban existence. Hubby's instant hatred of MariJo is inevitable, but his years of neglect have placed him in jeopardy. Loli is awash in the attentions of her sexy, truck-driving suitor and invites her to move in.

MIRAMAX

Victoria Abril (center) wants it both ways.

French Twist's creators are clearly hoping their film, with its multiple plot twists and hilarious collision of worlds gay and straight, will match *La Cage*'s success with American audiences. But the film's box office clout will ultimately depend on just how tangled up we get in arguments about political correctness and positive image (arguments the French are far less invested in). Some Americans will insist that Balasko deals only in one-dimensional stereotypes (she doesn't) and that she doesn't grant her characters room to evolve (she does).

The bottom line is that *French Twist* is infinitely more challenging in its sexual politics than *La Cage*. In Balasko's world, sexual orientation is infinitely more fluid than we supposed. Unlike Hollywood's recent takes on kinky love triangles, *Threesome* and *Three of Hearts*, *French Twist* manages to maintain the integrity (and likability) of its trio while not bending over backward to preserve and protect its het characters. Instead, it proposes a meltdown of rigid notions of sexual orientation—a new bisexual chic.

As all the stereotypes set up in its first half are undermined, *French Twist* becomes a film that's less about the clashing of sexualities than about their fusion. Balasko (a straight woman director, no less) seems to be telling us all to chill out and dispose of the labels. Loli wouldn't really care what the pundits say about her bisexuality, after all—she's simply a better person when she's getting it from both sides of the batter's box.

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Best-selling books

Top books being purchased by gays and lesbians

Men

1. *My First Time: Gay Men Describe Their First Same-Sex Experience* edited by Jack Hart (Alyson, $9.95)
2. *You Know You're Gay When...: Those Unforgettable Moments That Make Us Who We Are* by Joseph Cohen (Contemporary, $9.95)
3. *Why Gay Guys Are a Girl's Best Friend* by Karen Rauch and Jeff Fessler (Fireside, $7.95)
4. *In Defense of Beauty* by Tom Bianchi (Crown, $12)
5. *Growing Up Gay: From Left Out to Coming Out* by Funny Gay Males (Hyperion, $9.95)

Women

1. *Unnatural Dykes to Watch Out For* by Alison Bechdel (Firebrand, $10.95)
2. *Double Bluff* by Claire McNab (Naiad, $10.95)
3. *Key to Everything: Great Lesbian Love Poems* edited by Gerry Pearlberg (St. Martin's, $10)
4. *Martina: The Lives and Times of Martina Navratilova* by Adrianne Blue (Birch Lane, $19.95)
5. *The Sewing Circle: Hollywood's Greatest Secret—Female Stars Who Loved Other Women* by Axel Madsen (Carol, $19.95)

General

1. *Virtually Normal: An Argument About Homosexuality* by Andrew Sullivan (Alfred A. Knopf, $22)
2. *Do What I Say: Ms. Behavior's Guide to Gay & Lesbian Etiquette* by Meryl Cohn (Houghton Mifflin, $10.95)
3. *Virtual Equality: The Mainstreaming of Gay & Lesbian Liberation* by Urvashi Vaid (Anchor, $24.95)
4. *City of Friends: A Portrait of the Gay and Lesbian Community in America* by Simon LeVay and Elisabeth Nonas (MIT Press, $25)
5. *Sister and Brother: Lesbians and Gay Men Write About Their Lives Together* edited by Joan Nestle and John Preston (HarperSanFrancisco, $13)

Information based on sales of books as of January 2, 1996, at Lambda Rising bookstores in Washington, D.C.; Baltimore; and Rehoboth, Del., as well as on national mail-order sales

Television

Tube and twang

South Bank Show: k.d. lang (Bravo, premiering January 29 at 10 p.m. EST)
Reviewed by Barry Walters

You've heard the album, read the biography, seen the videos; and now you have the chance to catch the first documentary about one of the most compelling figures of popular music, Miss k.d. lang. The season premiere of the ongoing *South Bank Show* series out of England offers an hour's worth of quintessential performance fragments, early videos, interviews, and extended segments of the singer recording her latest album, *All You Can Eat,* in her custom Vancouver studio. You can't get any closer to the star without becoming a psychopath.

Much of the biographical material in the documentary will be familiar to most lang fans—from her childhood in Consort, Canada (population 207), her early "cowpunk" days, and her fascination with Patsy Cline to her Grammys, gold records, coming-out, and stardom. What's new about this treatment of her story is lang's own participation along with that of her close friends and creative partners. There are interviews with longtime songwriting collaborator Ben Mink, manager Larry Wanagas, country producer Owen Bradley (the man behind Cline's classics as well as lang's own *Shadowland*), Sire Records' Seymour Stein (the man who signed lang and Madonna), Roy Orbison's widow Barbara, and, most remarkably, Audrey Lang, k.d.'s mother, who offers the kind of insight only a mom could convey.

Lang unlocks her past on a new TV special.

We also get access to stuff that we'd see only with the star's permission—baby photos and home movies, prepop theatrical performances, and other previously unseen stuff. It's remarkable how much presence, vocal talent, and self-knowledge lang had early on. The singer, who is interviewed throughout, talks about how at age 12 her dad left her mom and the way it forced her to grow up instantly. One of the most endearing moments is when the adult k.d. sings a fragment of a song she wrote for a high school teacher, the object of a serious crush. She may have grown up in the smallest of towns, but Kathryn Dawn knew who she was even then.

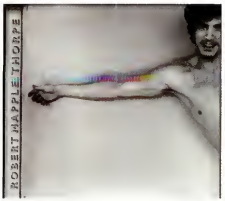
Perhaps most exciting to fans of her music are the sequences in the recording studio. Many have commented on the girlish content of *All You Can Eat,* an emphasis that was deliberate. "It's kind of like a teenager sitting alone and eating Chinese food," she remarks, explaining that her goal for the album was to be as simple and direct as possible. This show gives much for dedicated followers to chew on.

CD-ROM

Private parts

Robert Mapplethorpe: The Controversy (Digital Collections, $129.95)
Reviewed by Karen Wickre

It's hard to believe, but CD-ROMs have been around for ten years already. Equally remarkable, it's taken this long to see a host of really good titles that



can come close to the hype we've heard about what these magic discs can do for us. In the area of fine arts, recent titles from Digital Collections Inc. (DCI) are standouts. A case in point is DCI's *Robert Mapplethorpe: The Controversy,* which offers a minidocumentary on the photographer's life, including the public debate that erupted after his death in 1989—a debate that focused on his work's often confrontational sexual imagery.

The documentary's pensive and unintrusive piano-and-strings sound track adds richness to Mapplethorpe's beautifully reproduced photos as a female narrator glides through a script written as a thoughtful art history treatise. We see early works, famous works, and video clips of Mapplethorpe and such peers as Susan Sontag, Edmund White, and art dealer Leo Castelli discussing his influences and the development of his style.

From start to finish the program runs just under 30 minutes. But it's easy to stop the action, jump ahead or back, or study the images more closely. In addition to the multimedia documentary, the disk contains 700 of Mapplethorpe's images grouped by theme, from flowers and self-portraits to homosexuality and S/M.

The catalog also includes the entire selection of photos from "The Perfect Moment," the 1989 exhibit that whipped up headlines and oped pieces galore about the artist, the Corcoran Gallery of Art (which refused to open it), and Cincinnati gallery director Dennis Barrie (who was arrested for doing so). A well-designed, searchable database of the images includes good-size thumbnails to guide you. The photos have been digitally scanned at

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In profile

A quick look at a familiar (or not-so-familiar) face

"There's a delicate balance in death," says Charlotte Mayerson, who lost her son, Robert, to AIDS in 1990. "You don't want to take over your child's tragedy with your own grief, but sometimes I would feel so terrible, because here I am this robust old lady, which I felt was such an affront to him. I wanted to say, 'Christ, how I wish it could be me lying there.' "

Having taken care of her son for the four years before he died at age 35, Mayerson adds that when Robert first learned he had AIDS, he left his post as business editor of the *South China Morning Post* because of the lack of good treatment in Asia. "There was something so bittersweet about that for him," she says. "He had always led an adventurous life. So to end up lying around on your childhood bed was very sad."

So sad, in fact, that Mayerson began "scribbling out" her own thoughts, now collected in *The Death Cycle Machine,* her first book of poetry. A former executive editor at Random House, Mayerson, 68, hopes her work will reach not only those in similar situations but also those with no connection to the disease. "For this book to come out of the sort of sophisticated, middle-class blah-blah-blah from where I come," she says, "helps make the point that AIDS doesn't happen to 'them,' it happens to us."

—*Alan Frutkin*

very high resolution, so you can magnify and study them at extremely close range.

In this pristine atmosphere, with plenty of time to view the images, it's hard to imagine what the fuss was about—almost. Mapplethorpe's photographs are sharp, open, frank. They invite your gaze, whether it's a closeup of a flower, a torso, a penis, a face. As the documentary makes clear, the openness and the stillness of his images are subversive, simultaneously illustrating danger and repose. *Controversy* is an excellent way to understand and appreciate this dichotomy. It sharpens the viewer's appreciation of Mapplethorpe's evocative still images—at first deceptively plain, then distinctly unforgettable.

With the cooperation of the Mapplethorpe Foundation, DCI has also produced *An Overview,* a CD-ROM of Mapplethorpe's work that omits the sexual images, and *The Catalogue Raisonné,* a complete record of his work with more than 2,300 artworks. Labeled FOR ADULT AUDIENCES, *Controversy* will suit the admirer who wants Mapplethorpe's exacting studies of S/M sex, strong bodies, and gender-bending along with a wide range of his other photographs.

The *Controversy* CD comes in both Macintosh and Windows versions. For best viewing, you should have a 15-inch or larger 24-bit color monitor, a double-speed CD-ROM drive, and ten megabytes of random-access memory for smooth scrolling of multiple full-size images. Personal computer owners will need a 486 and at least Windows 3.1 for best results.

Books

Mothering heights

The Death Cycle Machine by Charlotte Mayerson (Crown Publishers, $15)
Reviewed by Anne Russo

I always thought mothers could make you better when you got sick. I was wrong. I was reminded of that heartrending truth when I read Charlotte Mayerson's *The Death Cycle Machine.*

Mayerson is a New York editor and writer whose son, Robert, died of complications from AIDS in January 1990. Her book brought back to me the unconditional love, the humor, the despair, the hopelessness when the harsh reality sets in that there is absolutely nothing you can do to make it all better, to make it disappear. You look for a miracle to happen, but there are none to be had.

I had to put the book aside for a while to compose myself while reading Mayerson's poems. They echoed my own feelings about my son Vito Russo. To many, Vito was a gay activist who wrote for *The Advocate* for years and authored *The Celluloid Closet.* To me, he was my friend, my teacher, my eyes to a whole new culture I knew nothing about. Like Robert Mayerson, Vito died of complications from AIDS in 1990.

This slim book of poetry gives no details of Robert's life. Instead, his mother uses her talent with words to tell what he was like and what it was like to outlive him. Mayerson's poems are touching, profound, and poignant—a lasting tribute to her son.

From the book's first poem, "Layout," I saw her ability to put together the feelings of loss in a way I never could:

> I didn't consider
> When I chose your name
> How it would look
> On a tombstone.

Mayerson's poems are full of her sense of humor and her determination not to get lost in self-pity. Those qualities also remind me of Vito. "I'm the one with AIDS," he joked when a friend started to get upset at the last birthday party we made for him. "You're the one that's feeling sorry for yourself." You can hear the same defiance in Mayerson's poem "Glad I Didn't Waste Money":

> Glad I didn't waste money
> straightening that tooth
> Glad I resisted
> Though they warned

The misalignment
Would cause wearing away,
Decay,
By the time he was middle-aged.
Well, at least I don't have to
worry about *that.*

Five years later Vito is still with me every day, in the memories of all we did together. But what I say to him in my heart I can't put into words. For Charlotte Mayerson's son, for mine, and for sons of other mothers everywhere who are dying because of AIDS, *The Death Cycle Machine* is an angry and brilliant tribute. I'm in awe of her achievement.

Black out

Speak My Name: Black Men on Masculinity and the American Dream
edited by Don Belton (Beacon, $24)
Reviewed by James Earl Hardy

Although Louis Farrakhan billed October 16, 1995, as a day of atonement, it was obvious from the temper and tenor of the million-plus men of African descent who claimed the Mall in the nation's capital that it was really a day of affirmation. Tired of being reduced to one of the two Willies (Horton the supercriminal or Gault the superathlete), they gathered to define themselves *for* themselves and declare their humanity to the world.

For those marchers and many others, *Speak My Name* will speak volumes. This brilliant, bold anthology documents where we've been and celebrates who and what we are. Its writers move through the maze of maleness and blackness with arresting, loving eyes, and their courageous reflections are accented by pain and pride.

Editor Don Belton has assembled an impressive posse of literary giants, including mystery master Walter Mosley, academic wizards Henry Louis Gates Jr. and Derrick Bell, and the prolific Pulitzer prize-winning playwright August Wilson, who penned the foreword. But the

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The buzz

The inside scoop on the spiciest entertainment news

Oh, brother: With his brother, Gerald O'Dowd, confined to a mental hospital after murdering his wife, Boy George—real name: George O'Dowd—is devastated. "I heard the news with absolute disbelief," George told The Buzz. "It still hasn't sunk in."

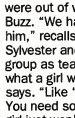
REUTER

Boy George

Ex-boxer Gerald, 32, described as paranoid schizophrenic, was sentenced to a mental institution December 21 for fatally stabbing his wife, Gillian, 32, at the couple's home in Tring, Hertfordshire, in September. Cards celebrating their first wedding anniversary were still in the window. "Gill was a very forthright, bright, intelligent woman," says George. "They seemed so blissfully happy."

Behavioral Pointers: As their well-publicized December 24 scuffle with their in-laws proves, the Pointer Sisters are nothing if not feisty. But then they learned their trade from feisty drag disco diva Sylvester. "We met when he told us he needed a backup singer and we were out of work," Anita told The Buzz. "We had so much fun with him," recalls June. Ruth saw Sylvester and his drag backup group as teachers. "They'll tell you what a girl won't tell you," she says. "Like 'Raise that dress up! You need some more lipstick!' A girl just won't talk to you like that."

Mad about your sister: "If *Mad About You* can't do it, who can?" asks actress Robin Bartlett. Her character, Debbie (the sister of Paul Reiser's character) came out as a lesbian in the January 7 episode. Playing gay worried the show's producers, but not her, Bartlett says. In fact, they shelved a second episode in which Debbie tells her parents. "They obviously thought it was risky," she adds. "So cards and letters are welcome."



Bartlett

best work comes from the lesser-known contributors.

After spending most of his years as the type of colored man whites feel safe around, Robin D.G. Kelly goes bald and experiences firsthand how most of us are mistaken for America's Most Wanted in the hilariously telling "Confessions of a Nice Negro, or Why I Shaved My Head." In "On the Distinction of 'Jr.,'" Houston A. Baker Jr. recounts the horrifying moment when his father, alarmed at his preteen son for letting out a high-pitched squeal, slaps him and calls him "sissy"—a moment many men, regardless of sexual orientation, can identify with. The incident haunts Baker, who is heterosexual, throughout his adult life, forcing him to question but eventually accept those things about himself (and life itself) that don't fit into his father's rigid view of manhood.

Surprisingly, Baker isn't the only one to touch on a gay theme, which makes *Speak My Name* a refreshing departure from other collections, which dismiss or demonize gay men. In fact, several gay men have their say. Bruce Morrow's heartbreaking "A Turn for the Worse" finds the writer confronting his crack-addicted stepfather, while Randall Kenan's "Mr. Brown and the Sweet Science" is a delicious love letter to a man who wasn't his role model but his hero (yes, there's a difference).

Belton himself is represented by two pieces. The first is his reportage of a dialogue between filmmaker Isaac Julien and poet/essayist/editor Essex Hemphill, who died of AIDS complications in 1995. With irony and intensity, Julien and Hemphill debate the place gay men occupy in African America and how best to conquer the archaic, demoralizing codes of masculinity that have zapped the African-American male's sense of spirit and self. (As Hemphill observes: "Unlearning self-hatred and fear is hard work.")

In "Voodoo for Charles," Belton contemplates confiding in his nephew—a young man he helped raise who's on the run for murder—about being gay while lamenting over how they've grown apart. Besides being bittersweet and absorbing, Belton's piece is an overdue tribute to the many African-American gay men who serve as mentors, brothers, and fathers to the male children in their families—a duty many of them perform without recognition or reward.

Belton's not "ghettoizing" gay voices is to be applauded. Still, it would have been a serious coup if the hostile-to-almost-nonexistent relations between heterosexual and homosexual African-American men had been specifically explored. That such an essay is missing is all the more disappointing considering Belton's decision to include Amiri Baraka and Haki R. Madhubuti, men who have published homophobic prose and/or heterosexist scholarship in the past.

Nevertheless, *Speak My Name* does for black men what Terry McMillan's *Waiting to Exhale* and the Delaney sisters' priceless *Having Our Say* have done for black women. It allows us to tell our own stories in our own words—stories that we breathe and bare every day.

True romance

Aimée & Jaguar: A Love Story, Berlin 1943 by Erica Fischer (HarperCollins, $24)
Reviewed by Leslie Belzberg

In this notable but poorly executed true story of lesbian lovers during the Holocaust, journalist Erica Fischer explores the universal theme of love. Unfortunately, she does so in an unclear and confusing fashion.

Using extensive personal interviews and actual letters, Fischer records the story of Elisabeth Wust (the Aimée of the book's title, also called Lilly in the story). As of this writing, Wust is still alive, an elderly pensioner living in Berlin.

For half a century Wust enjoyed the reputation of a "good German" who helped Jews during World War II. But she never admitted that one Jew she could not help was the love of her life—Felice

Schragenheim, whom she called "Jaguar." Now Wust finally tells all—how she fell in love with another woman during the final years of Hitler's regime and how she fought to save herself, her lover, her friends, and her family.

From the first moment they met, in November 1942, Jaguar flirted with Aimée—despite the fact that Aimée had four children, a number of male lovers, and a husband who served as a Nazi officer at the front. Aimée initially resisted Jaguar's subtle, suave advances until she found herself sick and alone in the hospital. Arriving daily with a bouquet of roses, Jaguar nursed her back to health. Aimée's resistance waned, and soon love bloomed.

By 1942 the organized extermination of the Jews in Eastern Europe was well under way. Jaguar didn't tell Aimée she was a Jew. Without explanation she disappeared for days at a time, looking for an escape from Germany. Her hope was to book passage on a boat to America. Each time she succeeded, the Nazis found some reason for the boat not to sail.

At these times Jaguar and Aimée could communicate only in writing. Their letters and poems, which still exist, express the depth of their devotion. They experienced desperation when separated. Once together again they spent uninterrupted time making love and finding ways to treat each other to those delicacies that were virtually impossible to get in a city ravaged by war.

Finally, Jaguar told Aimée of her plight. Aimée swore that she would never let Jaguar be captured. Others who shared their building felt differently. No one knows who informed the Gestapo of Jaguar's hiding place, but in August 1944 she was rounded up and taken away. It is speculated that she was finally sent to Bergen-Belsen, where she died of typhus or was exterminated.

Aimée never gave up hope. After the war she searched for survivors who might have known Jaguar. No one could remember her lover, and eventually she was forced to accept her death.

In 1981 Wust was awarded the German Federal Service Cross for her aid to Jews during the war. "When they wanted to give me the medal," she says, "my first thought was: *Turn it down, it won't bring Felice back.* But then I thought, *Perhaps it is for Felice.*"

Jaguar was deported not because of her sexual preference but because she was a Jew, and the book emphasizes that side of her story so strongly that gay and lesbian readers may feel shortchanged. Although it's a love story between two women, *Aimée & Jaguar* tells us relatively little about what life was like for lesbians in Germany in the 1940s. Aimée's first encounter with Jaguar and her friends is described briefly, but little else is said of their lifestyle.

Does this mean that homosexuality was not acknowledged—or was it simply accepted and not discussed? It's important to document the Holocaust's impact on the lives of gay men and lesbians. Unfortunately, *Aimée & Jaguar* is both complicated and laborious to follow. Had Fischer used a more organized chronological order, there would have been room for the strong narrative between the two lovers. As it is, *Aimée & Jaguar* gives us too much information on the one hand and not enough on the other.

The reviewers

- **Emanuel Levy** is a film critic for *Variety* and the author of six books on film.
- **Matthew Hays** is a contributing editor and film critic for the *Montreal Mirror.*
- **Barry Walters** is the pop-music critic for the *San Francisco Examiner.*
- **Karen Wickre** is the author of *Atlas to the World Wide Web.*
- **Anne Russo** is the mother of Vito Russo, author of *The Celluloid Closet.*
- **James Earl Hardy,** author of *B-Boy Blues,* writes on the arts for *Vibe* and *The Washington Post.*
- **Leslie Belzberg,** a television and feature film producer, is executive producer of HBO's *Dream On.*

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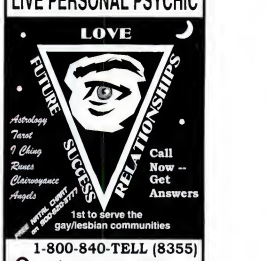

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Skincare, cosmetics, color analysis, wardrobe profile. Products for men and women. Let me help you pull your look together. Send $2.00 for information packet: Image Consultant, 334 Durham Avenue, Metuchen, NJ 08840.

HEALTH & FITNESS

Who Stole

America's Health? Free audio tape tells all. 800-653-0529. Request AC-3.

INTRODUCTIONS

Don't Be Alone!

Meet sophisticated gays and lesbians in your area code, or any area you select. 900-680-8788 X496. $2.00/min; 18+; 1tone required; maximum $25.00 Avalon 305-525-0800.

Gay and Lesbian Dateline Call 1-900-737-5333 Ext. 571

$2.00 /minute. 18+ 1tone. 24 hours Avalon Communication 305-525-0800.

Dateline 30,000+ Men & Women Nationwide

You choose area code. Call 900-622-0025-Extension 757 Now! $2.49/min. Calls between 1-15 min. Maximum cost $38.00. 1tone phone required. 18+Strauss Comm. 408-625-1910.

Find the Perfect Companion

All lifestyles dateline. Leave and pick up messages anytime by area code. 18+ $2.49/minute. 900-446-7448 Extension 11. Fonseca Telecom.

LEGAL

Gay? Facing Divorce?

Legal Services in San Jose -Bay Area. Family Law Attorney, Fernando Gutierrez, Ed.D., J.D. 408-280-1241.

MEDICAL

AIDS & HIV Treatment in Mexico

4 nights in-patient. All-natural herbal treatment. Transfer and full-year treatment included. For information &reservations: POB 27173, ElPaso, TX 79927. Fax 915-590-3141 Phone 500-445-0873.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

LAMBDA RECOVERY PROGRAM

A Discrete Chemical Dependency Program for Lesbians and Gay Men

Call for Confidential Info
1-800-245-4746

Impotence a Problem? Call 1-900-654-8057

Learn the cause and cure for impotence! Get the facts. $1.99/minute. 18+. Available 24 hours.

GERMANY

offers in Government Licensed Hospital

HIV/AIDS Treatment

with extra-corporeal whole body hyperthermia (blood heated outside the body)

Please ask for detailed information via:

VERAMEDICA Institute Braunstr. 7
81545 Munich, Germany
Phone: 011-49-89-647692
Fax: 011-49-89-6422859

PSYCHIC

Is Your Life

the way you want it to be? Gain insights into relationships, career, finances, etc. through sessions with Psychic Gary Chatham. 217-355-5548.

Renaissance Psychic/Astrologer, CSW

Career/relation/financial charts.-Private readings your office/ parties. Appointment: NYC 212-662-0801 or 900-860-2333 (Metro Access $2.75/ Min. 18+).

Mail Order

ART & ANTIQUES

Body Parts

You take great pride in the body you've worked hard to create. Immortalize its beauty and strength in an awesome BODY PARTS painting by well -known artist of bodybuilder portraits, Judy A. Jones. An original one- of- a- kind fine oil painting of your muscularly defined body or of a body you admire. Completion time of one of Ms. Jones pieces allows a limited number of commissions, so act now! To receive full details, please write to 612 Lighthouse Avenue, #218, Pacific Grove, CA 93950. Serious inquiries only.

GAYS and LESBIANS in CINEMA. Original movie posters for sale. Send $2 for illustrated 10 page list. Nick Pawlow, 4547 Milner Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19124.

CLOTHING

Gay & Lesbian T-Shirts $12.00

FREE BROCHURE. Send SASE: Camden Prints, 1401 Pucker Street, Stowe, VT 05672 802-253-4289.

Attention

Services and products are not tested, nor are they guaranteed. The appearance of advertising does not imply nor does it constitute endorsement by The Advocate.

Swimwear

Sexy, provocative, and comfortable swimwear for men. Custom work available. Free Brochure. Lynn's Lines, Box 66126, St. Pete Beach, FL 33736.

GIFTS

Your Own Ocean View

90 minute video, 15 difference ocean scenes. No music or narration. Bring the ocean to your home! 800-906-SANO, $15.95+ S&H, Visa/MC/Disc/Amex.

LESBIAN AND GAY GREETING CARDS

Express the Emotions of Life's Adventures....

† Cards, Invitations, Calendars, and Posters

† Order as many or as few as you like... you choose the cards you want!

† Call 24 hours a day for a catalog.

1-800-markkus
or fax us at 805-781-9139

the markkus catalog

You Are What You Eat!

Stuff exotic fruit products into your Christmas stockings. Catalog $2.00, refunded first order. Holiday Special: Pink and purple delicacies gift packed &shipped --$35.00. Johnny Kiwiseed 800-219-9071. Visa/MC

HEALTH PRODUCTS

Marvelous Mineral H20 For Sale! Only for H.I.V./AIDS. Call for order 404-209-1379.

Attention

Mail Order Advertisers

The California Business and Professional Code #17538.5 states "It is unlawful in the sale or offering for sale of consumer goods or services for any person conducting a mail order or catalog business in this state and utilizing a post office box address (or mail drop address) to fail to disclose the legal name under which business is done and the complete street address from which business is actually conducted in all advertising and promotional materials including order blanks and forms." Your compliance with this Code greatly expedites the processing of your Mail Order ad. Thank you for your cooperation.

PUBLICATIONS

Steriod Guidebook

Adding muscle, affects on immune system. Availability, prices, dosage, cycles. $14.95 to OSP, POB 10033, Marina del Rey, CA 90295.

Lesbian Book Club

LESBIAN BOOK CLUB. Discounted/Free Books. Free Catalog. Thunder Road 800-798-5828.

MISCELLANEOUS

Designer Light Fixtures

Designer Light Fixtures and Lamps and Low Prices. Free Catalog. International Design Group. 1201 N. Dearborn, Suite 173, Chicago, IL 60610

Gay and Lesbian Marriage Certificates

Catholic priest will bless your gay/lesbian marriage by mail and issue you a Christian marriage certificate. Send names, date of commitment, address, and $45 stipend to: Father Charles, POB 31517, San Francisco, CA 94131-0517. charles@slip.net

Use this form to place your ad in Marketspace

Optional headlines $12.00 per line, maximum of 2

ONE CHARACTER PER SPACE

Optional headline

ONE CHARACTER PER SPACE

TEXT OF AD. $1.60 per word. 10 word minimum
If you need more space, attach an extra sheet.

PLACE MY AD IN THIS CATEGORY: (Check one)

- ❑ Real Estate-Sales & Rentals
- ❑ Travel & Accommodations
- ❑ Business Opportunities
- ❑ Employment
- ❑ Merchandise For Sale
- ❑ Merchandise Wanted
- ❑ Organizations
- ❑ Professional Services
- ❑ Mail Order
- ❑ Etc.

CALCULATE THE COST OF YOUR AD (PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE)

HEADLINE: NUMBER OF LINES:	x **$12.00** =	
AD TEXT: NUMBER OF WORDS:	x **$ 1.60** =	
	SUBTOTAL	
NUMBER OF ISSUES AD IS TO RUN	x	
FREQUENCY DISCOUNT		
TOTAL AMOUNT DUE		

Display ads are available in three sizes:
1" x 1 5/8" = $90
2" x 1 5/8" = $160
3" x 1 5/8" = $231
Call (213) 871-1225 x 3039 for artwork specifications.

Frequency discounts for all advertising:
6 consecutive issues, 10% off
12 consecutive issues, 15% off
24 consecutive issues, 20% off

Make check or money order payable to LPI, or use your VISA or MasterCard. DO NOT SEND CASH.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ **State** _____ **ZIP** _____

Phone (_____) _____

MasterCard _____ **Exp.** _____

Visa _____ **Exp.** _____

Auth. signature _____

RETURN THIS FORM, ALONG WITH PAYMENT TO:
LPI, Attn: Marketspace
P.O. Box 4371.
Los Angeles, CA 90078-4371
OR FAX TO: **(213) 467-0173**

ADVERTISING DEADLINES:

Issue	Deadline	Cover Date
703	Feb 05	Mar 19
704	Feb 20	Apr 02
705	Mar 04	Apr 16

All copy changes must be received by The Advocate in writing by the deadline of the issue in which the new copy will appear and accompanied by payment for any additional text. There is a $20 cancellation fee. Advertising of a sexual nature will not be accepted. All copy for Marketspace advertising is subject to approval of the publisher.

AMERICA'S PIONEER GAY RESORT

Call the Key West Business Guild at 1-800-535-7797 for your Free Color Brochure.
Check Gay Travel on Gay/Lesbian Forum. Members: IGTA

We Only Compete With Ourselves.

OASIS & CORAL TREE INN

Unparalleled Men's Guesthouses

Select from either of our two distinct, exclusively-male guesthouses. Enjoy comfortable accommodations, special amenities and use of facilities at both resorts, including Oasis' 24-man hot tub - the largest in South Florida.

(800) 362-7477 • (800) 362-7477

823/822 Fleming St. /Key West, FL 33040

Email: OASISCT @ aol.com

"★★★★"
"Highly recommended."
– OUT & ABOUT
"One of Key West's most impressive and refined lodgings."
– The Advocate
"Intimate...nicely done."
– Condé Nast Traveler

THE
BRASS KEY
GUESTHOUSE

Key West • 1- 800-932-9119
Also In Provincetown

Big RUBY'S GUESTHOUSE

At the heart of everything

So many pleasures come together. Quiet & seclusion. Just half a block from Duval St. Luxury touches - sumptuous beds, superthick towels. A full breakfast served poolside each morning. The charm of the house, the lushness of the pool - you'll feel right at home. (All rooms with A/C, ceiling fans, refrigerator-bars, color TV. Complimentary breakfast, cocktail hours.)

409 Appelrouth Lane, • Key West, FL 33040
305-296-2323 •1-800-477-RUBY

Key Lodge in Key West

It's like staying with a friend . . . 1•800•458•1296

Key Lodge is a little different. We're in the heart of old town. The environment is friendly and private . . . the company, mixed. Our accommodations are first rate. Individually decorated rooms, each with color TV, AC, refrigerator, phone and ceiling fan. Heated pool. Color brochure available.

1004-A DUVAL ST. KEY WEST, FL 33040 • (305) 296-9915 / 296-9750

ISLAND HOUSE

Key West's Largest Men's Resort

Enclosed Tropical Compound
of 34 units
Clothing Optional
Large Swimming Pool, Sauna,
Jacuzzi, Cafe
24-hour Desk

1129 Fleming St., Key West, FL 33040
(305) 294-6284 • FAX (305) 292-0051

Under New Management.
For Information/Reservations

Call 800-890-6284

PRIVATE FRIENDLY FUN

A Guesthouse for Men.

LIME HOUSE INN

Beautiful Gardens. Beautiful Rooms. Beautiful Men.

Pool & Spa, Nude Sunning, Private Baths, Kitchens, Phones, TV & A/C. 2 Blocks to Duval St.

800-374-4242 • 305-296-2978
FAX 305-294-5858

219 Elizabeth St., Key West, FL 33040

Come Sun Your Buns By Our Pool!

MANGROVE House

Exclusively for Men • 1 1/2 blocks to Duval
Large Rooms & Apartments with Private Bath
AC, Bahama Fans & Complimentary Breakfast.
623 Southard St., Key West, FL 33040
305-294-1866 • 800-294-1866

LIGHTHOUSE COURT

At Historic Key West Lighthouse, an exquisitely relaxed compound of cottages, rooms, suites and apartments, nestled in over a half-acre of sundecks and tropical gardens. Just a block from Duval Street Bars, Restaurants and Shops. Heated pool, Jacuzzi, Health Club, Café and Bar , across from Hemingway's house.

902 Whitehead, Key West, FL 33040
(305) 294-9588

KEY WEST

DISCOVER

Key West

YOURSELF

CURRY HOUSE

KEY WEST'S PREMIER GUESTHOUSE FOR MEN

Key West's original bed & breakfast exclusively serving men for more than 20 years. Friendly, Elegant, Affordable. Large Pool & Jacuzzi

(305) 294-6777 • (800) 633-7439
806 Fleming St., Key West, FL 33040

Discover a True Womyn's Paradise:

The enchanting

Rainbow House

Key West's ***Only*** *Exclusively Womyn's Guest House*

1-800-749-6696
1-305-292-1450
Call for a color brochure

525 United Street Key West, FL 33040

All These Amenities And Not A Single* Room.

Sheraton Suites

KEY WEST

* All our accommodations are comfortable suites with lots of room & amenities:

• On Smathers Beach • Pool and cascading waterfall
• Complimentary buffet breakfast
•Free shuttle service to Old Town • Fitness Center
•King Suites with whirlpool baths
• Wet bar, mini microwave, coffee maker

Call 1-800-452-3224

2001 S. Roosevelt Blvd. Key West, FL 33040
Phone: (305) 292-9800 • Fax: (305) 294-6009

EXPERIENCE...

Colours Destinations

YOUR DOORWAY TO OUR WORLD

Distinctive Lodgings for Men & Women with Unparalleled Service

1-800-ARRIVAL
305-532-9341
fax: 305-534-0362

Key West, South Miami Beach, & San Jose, Costa Rica

"Not Just A Place – But A State of Mind"

Guesthouse for Gay Men. Sun or Swim Nude

Your tropical retreat in Key West. Quiet, secluded, romantic location. All rooms with AC/TV. Modest rates. Continental breakfast included.

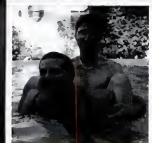
Newton Street Station
1414 Newton St., Key West, FL 33040
800-248-2457 305-294-4288
FAX 305-292-5062

Sunsational!

Large Pool & Spa In a Tropical Garden Setting. Friendly, Relaxed Atmosphere. Competitive Rates. All Rooms With Private Bath.

Enjoy the Best Vacation of Your Life!
Your Hosts, Jim & Tom

CALL ABOUT OUR WEDDING PACKAGE



Randy and Jim
and the Men of Sea Isle
are waiting for your call!

NEW Sundecks • NEW Rumpus Room
NEW Breakfast Bar...plus...
Big Pool • Great Gym • Private Parking
Many, many more amenities-call for details

800-995-4786

Sea Isle

More than a GUESTHOUSE...
Your Paradise!

The PINES Guesthouse

Call or Write For Our Color Brochure
521 United St., Key West, FL 33040
305-296-7467 • 800-282-PINE

Get Close. Our historic guesthouse is centrally located just steps away from shopping, nightlife, sunset, seaport district and more. Enjoy the friendly exclusively male atmosphere, large rooms, pool and special amenities.

800-525-2488
601 Caroline St., Key West, FL 33040
305-294-6969

Cypress House

COCONUT GROVE GUESTHOUSE

Panoramic Rooftop Sundecks • Secluded Wood Decked Pool • Relaxed Hospitality • Tropical Elegance • Apartments Also Available

817 Fleming St. • Key West, FL 33040
(305) 296-5107 (800) 262-6055

McChesney/Rynearson

MR Real Estate Group

Vacation Rentals and Sales

526 Southard Street, Key West
(800)462-5937 (GO2-KWEST)
(305)294-3040

The City of Palm Springs Welcomes You

Palm Springs, California

ALEXANDER RESORT

Eight tastefully appointed guest rooms with king beds, color TV's, VCR's, phones, refrigerators, some with kitchens and private patios. Beautifully landscaped grounds, sparkling swimming pool and spa. Total privacy invites nude sunbathing. Continental breakfast and light lunch. ***Competitive rates and discounts available.***

598 Grenfall Road - Palm Springs, CA 92264

(619) 327-6911 · (800) 448-6197

— Call or write for brochure —

INN Exile PALM SPRINGS

THE GANG WAY...OUR SOCIAL ROOM · GYMNASIUM · POOL & SPA · BREAKFAST & LUNCHEON · MEN · CLOTHING ALWAYS OPTIONAL

you'll never guess

Brochure & Reservations Call
(800) 962-0186

960 Camino Parocela
Palm Springs, California 92262
ph: (619) 327-6413 fax: (619) 320-5745

A MAN'S RESORT

WHAT'S HOT THIS SEASON:

•THE NEW SPA CASINO - Discover Palm Springs' newest games at the Spa Casino. The Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians have opened the first Indian casino within the City of Palm Springs. Featured are standard card games like Poker, Pan, Spa 21, plus "Pull-tab" machines - a form of slot machine legal on tribal lands within California.

•GAY BARS & CLUBS - Palm Springs offers more than a dozen choices for gay nightlife. So wether it's a piano bar, lesbian bar, dance clubs - '90's mixes or country and western, or a local pub... come party the Palm Springs scene. Special events and/or entertainment can be found at the various night-spots throughout the year - check any of the local gay publications upon your arrival for current happenings.

•THE GREAT OUTDOORS IN PALM SPRINGS STYLE - How about a hike through the Living Desert? Or perhaps you'd rather gallop across it. Or soar hundreds of feet above it in a hot air balloon. Ready for excitement? Defy fate on the thrilling slides at Oasis Waterpark. In a playful mood? Play tennis outdoors, year-round. Or just play around the pool at your host hotel, it's all up to you.

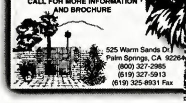
•GREAT GAY RESORTS - The many accommodations range from romantic retreats to resorts on the wild side. As no two resorts, amenities or room rates are the same, we suggest you call for brochures to find the one best for you.

EL MIRASOL VILLAS

Palm Springs Premier Resort Est. 1975

The service and setting are the finest in Palm Springs. Two large pools (clothing optional around one) and spa. Complementary breakfast, lunch, sodas, gym passes, video library, bicycles, etc. TV's and VCR's in bedrooms and living rooms.

CALL FOR MORE INFORMATION AND BROCHURE



525 Warm Sands Dr.
Palm Springs, CA 92264
(800) 327-2985
(619) 327-5913
(619) 325-8931 Fax

Hacienda en Sueño

Luxurious one-bedroom centrally air-conditioned apartments with private phones and every amenity including two large swimming pools and a bubbling spa over lots of secluded tropical privacy with Micro Cool misting systems and free use of Gold's gym

586 Warm Sands Drive,
Palm Springs, CA 92264

Color Brochure & Reservations:
1-800-359-2007

Desert PARADISE HOTEL

Casual Elegance

A NEW GENTLEMEN'S RESORT OFFERING:
LUSH GARDEN SETTINGS
STYLISHLY DECORATED SUITES
POOLSIDE BREAKFAST
•
615 WARM SANDS DR.
PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
(619) 320-5650
(800) 342-7635 (OUTSIDE CA)

A MAN'S PRIVATE PARADISE! THE COLUMNS RESORT

The BEAUTY of a lush tropical paradise.
The COMFORT of a private retreat.
The QUIET of a desert island.

RESERVATIONS OR BROCHURE
800-798-0655

Internet Address:
RESCOLUMNS@aol.com
Local #: 619-325-0655
FAX: 619-322-1436
537 Grenfall Road
Palm Springs
CA 92264

Pool • Spa • Mist • Air • Clothing Optional

GET NAKED IN THE SUN

DESERT HANGOUT

20 Poolside Rooms
Clothing Optional
Close to Gay Nightlife
(800) 660-5066
(619) 320-5984

NATURAL SUNBATHING

Atrium
Vista Grande
2 POOLS NITE & DAY
2 JACUZZI'S
Mirage
PRIVATE RESORTS

"ASK ABOUT OUR EXOTIC WATERFALLS"

Reservations: 1-800-669-1069
619/322-2404
574 WARM SANDS DR. • PALM SPRINGS, CA 92264

INNTRIGUE

A Private Resort

Everyone Has Rooms...
Here Are Our Extras

•2 Pools and 2 Hot Tubs •Fireplaces
•Free Gold's Gym Passes •Pool Table
•2-bedroom Studios •Laundry Fac.
and plenty of Southern Hospitality

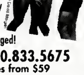
We have what you're looking for!

526 Warm Sands Dr., Palm Springs, CA 92264
619-323-7505/800-798-8781/Fax 619-323-1055

WARM SANDS NEWEST PLAYGROUND!

INNdulge Palm Springs

"to pamper, pleasure, or gratify oneself"



Enjoy Worm Sands newest Goy resort. 18 lorge rooms surrounding o privote courtyord with 24 hour pool ond spo. *Clothing is forever optionol!* Complimentory Euro-Breokfost ond ofternoon "Vins et Fromoges," VCRs ond more! You deserve to be INNdulged!

RSV./Info. 1.800.833.5675
Introductory rates from $59

601 Grenfall Road · In the Heart of Warm Sands
Palm Springs, CA 92264
Tel 619.327.1408 Fax 619.327.7273

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THE CITY OF PALM SPRINGS WELCOMES YOU

•VILLAGEFEST - Every Thursday night Palm Canyon Drive in the heart of downtown is transformed into a weekly street fair. Artists, craftsmen, food vendors and entertainers team up to bring you an evening of old-fashioned good times and some great people watching (cruising) as well.

•DESERT HILLS FACTORY OUTLETS - Just 15-20 minutes from Palm Springs you can shop over 100 factory outlet stores.

•GREAT WEATHER - Palm Springs offers you about 350 days of sunshine annually. So if your looking for a summer day in the middle of winter - head to Palm Springs!

•THE AERIAL TRAMWAY - Ride the world famous Palm Springs Aerial Tramway to the mountain station at an elevation of 8,516 feet, the vistas are spectacular.

•THE INDIAN CANYONS - Awe inspiring canyons, waterfalls, hiking trails, a trading post and a true "oasis" - the natural palm grove in Palm Canyon. Try a picnic lunch with that special someone or new found friends from your host hotel.

GET YOUR FREE COPY OF
The Palm Springs Visitors Guide
& The Gay Guide to Palm Springs

Together they show you where to go, what to see, dining, nightlife & more. The City of Palm Springs will send you both comprehensive free guides, they're indispensable! **Call 1-800-34-SPRINGS**

Be sure to ask for the Gay Guide!

For hotel brochures, simply call the individual hotels advertising here.

PENING IN OCTOBER, 1995.
PALM SPRINGS' NEWEST &
MOST EXOTIC PRIVATE
MEN'S RESORT...

SANTIAGO
PALM SPRINGS

JACUZZI & OVERSIZED POOL
22 DISTINCTIVE ROOMS
CLOTHING OPTIONAL
MISTING SYSTEM

COMPLIMENTARY BREAKFAST
COMPLIMENTARY LUNCH
GOLD'S GYM PASSES
VIDEO LIBRARY

650 SAN LORENZO ROAD
PALM SPRINGS, CA 92264
1•800•710•7729

"HIGH SEXUAL TEMPERATURE"
OUT & ABOUT TRAVEL MAG

Join us & find out why!
NATURAL SUNBATHING
Breakfast & Lunch
TVS•VCRS•VIDEOS
Phones•Kitchens
Central Location
Air Conditioned
Heated Pool
16 MAN SPA
Kool Fog
Laundry

"CAMP PALM SPRINGS"
24 Room Private Resort Hotel For Men
Reservations: 800•793•0063
619•322•CAMP FAX 619•322•6699
AOL CAMPER69
722 San Lorenzo Rd. Palm Springs, CA 92264

AVANTI

A PRIVATE RESORT

- Large pool & jacuzzi
- Private grounds for nude sunbathing
- Special low midweek rates
- Clean, tasteful rooms/suites
- TV's, VCR's and phones

715 San Lorenzo Rd. Palm Springs, CA 92264
E-mail: PSFUN4U@AOL.COM
619-325-9723 800-572-2779

TRIANGLE INN

Escape... within the privacy of our beautifully landscaped and gated grounds. Nine studio, one & two bedroom suites await. All just steps from a sparkling heated pool and soothing spa... where swim suits are optional. A private resort for men that's casually inviting, lovingly maintained.

The Triangle Inn is an experience well worth repeating again and again. It is a delightful feast for the eyes and a soothing embrace for the troubled spirit, a place where one can make new friends or surrender to peace and solitude. Either way there is always something here to remind us that life is worth living. Visitors return home with recharged batteries, ready once more to face the challenges of everyday life. The Triangle Inn is an experience that will linger on long after the end of the vacation.

For reservations or a color brochure see your travel agent or call
THE TRIANGLE INN
800/732-7555 ▼ 619/322-7993
555 San Lorenzo Road
Palm Springs CA 92264

Canyon Boy's Club
private resort

Size DOES Matter!

32 newly-renovated rooms
QUIET, FRIENDLY and RELAXED

- **50 ft. pool**
- **16 man SPA**
- **STEAM ROOM**
- **DRY SAUNA**
- clothing optional
- huge courtyard
- cable TV & in-room video channels
- private patios
- refrigerator (full kitchens available)
- A/C & phones
- DISCOUNT for 5 nights
- gym passes available
- Walk to downtown shops & restaurants

$59 - $89

reserv. **800-295-2582**
619-322-4367 fax: 619-322-4024
960 N.Palm Canyon Dr., Palm Springs, CA 92262
e-mail: CanyonClub@tenpct.com
http://www.tenpct.com/canyonclub

WHEN ONLY THE BEST WILL DO.

THE "NEW" ABBEY
This Palm Springs landmark has been redone in casual opulence & features an acre of walled elegance.

THE HARLOW CLUB
This classic Spanish enclave is nestled among enchanting tropical gardens offering the ultimate in privacy.

Accomodations from $135.00 per night

BROCHURE & RESERVATIONS
1-800-223-4073

HARLOW CLUB HOTELS
PALM SPRINGS, CA

PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA

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Do we need a gay gene?

I DON'T OFTEN FIND MYSELF OPPOSED TO THE official pronouncements of Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays, a group that fights the good fight for us. But on the issue of the so-called "gay gene," we part company. PFLAG believes that if scientists prove there is a biological basis for homosexuality, homophobes will come to see that God or Nature ordained it: Those who hated us will forgive us our differences, which they will understand to be as natural as left-handedness or redheadedness. Such assumptions seem to me to be sadly naive. Clearly, one does not choose to be born black, yet that fact has done nothing to eradicate racism.

But my problem with the search for something like a gay gene goes beyond the point that its discovery would be politically useless to us (and the money better spent finding a cure for AIDS or breast cancer); it seems to me that the quest for a biological explanation for homosexuality reveals blindness to the world outside the lab. Maybe the scientific eye that is stuck to the microscope just cannot be expected to scrutinize history or anthropology or cultural theory. But when scientists observe, for example, that the size of the anterior commissures in some gay men is closer to that of women than that of heterosexual men, aren't they conflating sexual orientation and gender and assuming, as their confused scientific forefathers did 100 years ago, that homosexual men are "inverts," women in men's bodies? Do scientists know, as historians do, that the very effeminate 18th-century fop was generally obsessively heterosexual?

What the "gay gene" scientists don't know about history can kill us—and it has.

Do the "gay gene" scientists know that for many individuals, sexual orientation changes over a lifetime? Do the anterior commissures shrink or expand along with those changes? Do the genetic markers change? Have those scientists who claimed to have found that the testosterone level of lesbians is higher than that of heterosexual women examined any lesbian feminists who spent years of their lives as wives and mothers and later chose, through the politics of radical feminism, to become dykes? Did the lesbian feminists' testosterone levels change along with their lifestyles?

Do the scientists know how common lesbian relationships are among the co-wives of the polygamous Zande tribe of central Africa? Do they know that the Australian Aboriginal female was expected to form a lesbian relationship with her female cross-cousin, whose family would then give her their son to marry? Do they know that among Tahitian women mutual mouth-genital contact and mutual masturbation is common and does not preclude their engaging in heterosexual behavior?

What they don't know can kill us—and it has. The first scientific theory to posit that homosexuals are born that way was articulated by Karl Ulrichs, a German lawyer and writer who was himself a homosexual. In the 1860s Ulrichs argued (with the same logic that drives PFLAC to embrace the gay gene theory) that since homosexuality is biological, it is as impossible to make a homosexual into a heterosexual as it is to "make a leopard change its spots."

But for decades now many scientists who have believed that homosexuality has a biological cause—whether it be hormones, genes, or brain configuration—have been on a mad search to find ways to make the gay leopard change its spots. In the 1930s, for example, it was thought that lesbians were suffering from a "masculine psychological state" because their adrenal glands had gone haywire. As *The New York Times* reported in 1934, scientists had "found" that removing an adrenal gland in lesbians cured them of their "aversion to marriage." Similarly, in 1967 the German scientist Günter Dörner "found" that male homosexuality had neuroendocrinological causes that began in utero. His discovery led German surgeons throughout the 1970s to cut into the hypothalamus of gay men in order to straighten them out.

Do we have any reason to think that, with the advent of genetic-engineering capabilities, if scientists are convinced that homosexuality is biological, even grosser violations won't be performed in the future in order to rid the world of homosexuals? Has the Western world become accepting of homosexuals once and for all? History (such as that of Germany in the liberal 1920s and the fascistic 1930s and '40s) suggests that one cannot count on the enlightenment of a particular era continuing indefinitely.

But even if we believe we are now safe from scientific atrocities, can we hope to be regarded as anything other than biologically unfortunate if we claim we are homosexual because we were born that way? Just by virtue of seeking an explanation for homosexuality, aren't we falling into the trap of believing that "something went wrong" to make us as we are? Why should we not learn from the lesbian feminists of the 1970s, who normalized and valorized homosexuality by arguing that any woman could choose to become a lesbian—and that it was a fine choice? In a country dedicated to the principle of the individual's right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, why is it not sufficient to explain our homosexual lives in terms of our rightful pursuit of liberty and happiness? Why do we need to justify ourselves any other way?

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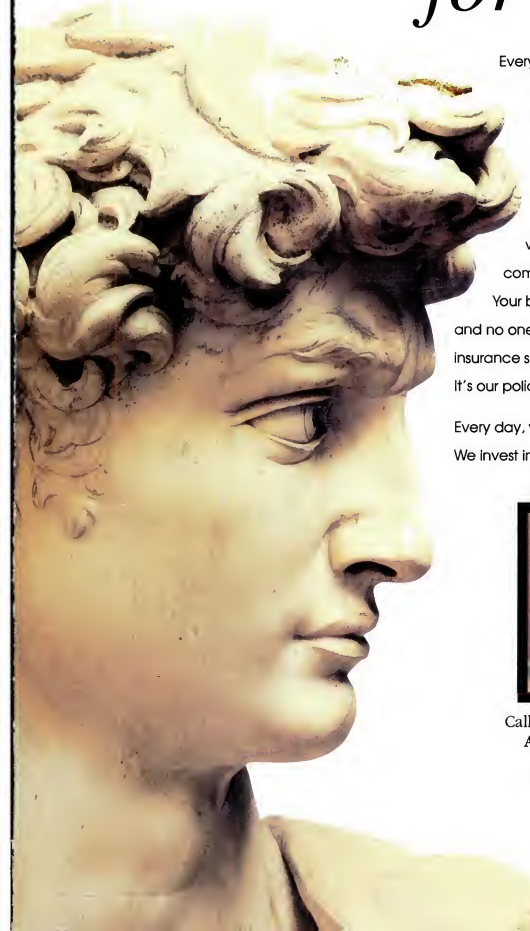

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